AGRARIAN AND POLITICAL MOVEMENTS

STATES OF ORISSA

SADASIBA PRADHAN

In recent years, several scholars have enriched Orissan historiography, but no one has taken pains to study the sad plight of the people of the erstwhile twenty-six Feudatory States of Orissa and their struggle against the evils of feudal order.

The present work of Dr. Sadasiba Pradhan brings to limelight the economic factors in a rural based agrarian society which motivated the mute peasants to rise against their Rajas. The author has traced the developments coherently. In Chapter One, origin and short history of the Feudatory States of Orissa under Mughals, Marathas and the British is given. Chapter Two deals with the status of the Feudatory Chiefs and the pattern of judicial and land revenue administration. Chapter Three highlights how the English education was denied to the people to check the growth of political consciousness. Chapter Four discusses the nature and consequences of the peasants' uprising threadbare in the context of local situation and All-India perspective. Chapter Five unfolds the interesting saga of the integration of the Feudatory States with the Orissa province. In Chapter Six, the author has given his observations on the salient characteristics of the Prajamandal movement and exposes the double standard of the Rajas and the hypocrisy of the colonial rule.

The present monograph would interest not only intelligentsia but be useful to scholars and researchers of political science and history.

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AGRARIAN AND POLITICAL MOVEMENTS : STATES OF ORISSA

AGRARIAN AND POLITICAL MOVEMENTS:
STATES OF ORISSA : 1931 to 1949

DR. SADASIBA PRADHAN



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Dedicated to the memory
of my Late Uncle
Radha Charan Sahu

Foreword

EVEN TODAY the political life in Orissa is represented by two distinctly separate sub-regions—the coastal plains and the Western hilly areas consisting of people for whom two different administrative systems had been evolved by the British Government. The districts of Balasore, Cuttack and Puri were under the direct rule of the Commissioner of Orissa division, whereas a number of Princely States which constituted small, semi-autonomous units in the mountainous region were governed by no less than 26 Feudatory Chiefs called 'Rajas' under the watchful supervision of the Superintendent. For administrative convenience the offices of the Commissioner and the Superintendent were combined in one member of the Indian Civil Service with Headquarters at Cuttack. The Rajas though treated as subordinates to British Paramountcy were allowed to rule their respective States without any fear of interference and remained outside the jurisdiction of British Regulations. Since 1804, separate Treaties and Engagements signed with the Rajas vested on them enough power to conduct the internal administration with a "free hand". Their loyalty to the Raj was considered more important than the welfare of the people they governed.

Thus, two parallel Governments with different code administered the Oriya-speaking people during the British regime. While Rule of Law could be enforced by the Commissioner in the districts of Balasore, Cuttack and Puri, as Superintendent of the Feudatory States he showed indulgence to the arbitrary and personal rule of the Rajas. Such a paradoxical situation continued with minor changes in the framework of administration till December 1947 when the Congress Government under Dr. Harekrushna Mahtab initiated the bold policy of integrating the Princely States with Orissa Province for a balanced growth of the people and their economy.

Notwithstanding the fact that in recent years several Ph.D. dissertations have enriched Orissan historiography, no scholar

took pains to study the sad plight of the people of the erstwhile Feudatory States and their struggle against the evils of a feudal order. These people being mostly peasants were thoroughly exploited by the despotic Rajas for over centuries and due to lack of education could not develop any consciousness to protest against injustice. It was during the Gandhian struggle for freedom from foreign rule that political awareness in the dark citadels of tyranny and oppression began to spread leading to the formation of *Prajamandals* as organisational base for a much needed popular movement. To the British Government the *Prajamandals* appeared as strongholds of nationalism and their agitation against feudal exploitation was misconstrued as another version of anti-British upsurge. This misconception helped the Rajas in obtaining British support to crush the *Prajamandals* wherever possible, though not with success. In the process, the real nature of *Durbar* administration got exposed drawing the attention of the whole country. From 1931 to 1947, the Congress 'struggle for freedom' and *Prajamandals*' fight for liberation from feudal shackles went on simultaneously for creating a new socio-political order.

The present work of Dr. Sadasiba Pradhan breaks new ground in historical research by analysing the economic factors in a rural based agrarian society which motivated the mute peasants to rise against their Rajas. The author has traced the developments coherently with rare objectivity. How a tradition bound community eschewed the age-old inertia to combat against the atrocious Rajas has been discussed with sympathy and appreciation. The evidences have been drawn from various archival sources and personal interviews with persons who were actively involved in the *Prajamandal* movement. In marshalling the source materials and drawing logical conclusions the author has shown excellent craftsmanship. While congratulating Dr. Pradhan for his commendable work on a hitherto neglected aspect of peoples' movement in our country, I sincerely hope that this book will be a dependable source for scholars working on cognate themes.

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Preface

In 1803 when the coastal tract of Orissa was occupied by the East India Company, a substantial portion of the Oriya-speaking territory constituting the *Garjāt* States was deliberately kept outside the British administration to form a buffer zone against any possible military threats of the Bhonsle of Nagpur. The Company signed separate treaty engagements with the Chiefs ruling over the *Garjāt* States and adopted a very cautious policy in mutual relationship. With the gradual consolidation of the British power following the liquidation of the Maratha menace against their supremacy, the Company assumed the role of Paramount Power and reduced the Princely States to the status of Feudatories. They ensured effective control over the Princes without, however, involving themselves much in the internal administration of the States. The Rulers having been allowed to enjoy semi-autonomous status followed a pattern of administration more akin to feudal system of the Medieval age. They deprived their subjects from the benefits of Western education, denied them contact with the adjacent British administered districts of Cuttack, Puri, Balasore and Sambalpur and subjected them to much feudal oppression. Lack of education not only retarded the growth of political consciousness among the people but also provided a congenial atmosphere for the growth of tyranny. Since the people living in the States were primarily illiterate peasants, the Rulers abused their powers in exploiting them through enhanced rents, forced labour, numerous illegal impositions and ruthless coercion. In the social hierarchy the Rulers' families enjoyed the monopoly of privileges and political power showing least regard for the welfare of the people. While such an anomalous situation thrived in the Feudatory States with the full knowledge of the British Government, the latter evinced neither care nor interest to promote intellectual and material progress of the suffering peasantry. The cumulative

effect of tyranny and neglect kept the peasants utterly backward and desperately groping in a state of exploitation and misery. Since the territorial extent of the Feudatory States was much larger than the British administered area, the unenviable conditions of the peasants impeded the total uniform growth of the Oriya-speaking people, thereby creating an economic enigma of 'poverty amidst plenty' in Orissa.

The surging wave of the Non-cooperation and Civil Disobedience movements launched by the Indian National Congress caught the people of the Orissa division (Balasore, Cuttack, Puri and Sambalpur Districts) in an unprecedented nationalist fervour in the 1930s. From such a momentous development the States' people could not remain aloof for long. A handful of English educated persons formed the first political association called the States' Peoples' Conference in 1931 and began the much needed onslaught against the evils of feudal social order and bizarre administration. As years passed, the politically conscious elite class though limited in number, exhibited courage to organise the mute peasants in their respective States through *Prajamandals.* During 1937 to 1947, agrarian discontent precipitated popular uprisings in the States of Orissa demanding the abolition of feudal levies and institution of democratic Governments. The Congress-led Provincial Government of the Orissa Province under the Premiership of Dr. Hare Krushna Mahtab considered it incongruous to have the Rule of Law and liberal democratic Government for a portion of the Oriya-speaking tracts, while another portion was groaning under autocracy. He and the Congress Party being openly sympathetic to the just cause of the States' Peoples' Conference encouraged the move for the abolition of Princely Order and integration of the States with the Orissa Province. The missionary zeal with which Mahtab worked for the integration received the support of Sardar Patel and the Government of India in December 1947 when all the Oriya-speaking Feudatory States except Mayurbhanj merged with Orissa and constituted integral parts of the Province. After a short period of separate political existence Mayurbhanj too merged with Orissa in January 1949.

The above-mentioned account of the struggle of the people in the Feudatory States of Orissa during 1931-1949 has not been brought to limelight by any scholar so far although there have

been sporadic attempts to discuss the history of administration, political unrest in the 19th century, integration of the States by scholars like Dr. K.M. Patra (*Orissa under the East India Company*, New Delhi, 1971, and *Orissa State Legislature and Freedom Struggle*, New Delhi, 1979), Dr. J.K. Samal (*Orissa Under the British Crown*, New Delhi, 1977) and Dr. Hare Krushna Mahtab (*The Beginning of the End*, Cuttack, 1972). There is no work available at present to reveal the popular struggle for liberation from feudal authorities and agrarian exploitation. This work is, therefore, the first modest attempt to study exhaustively the history of the *Prajamandal* movement in *Garjāt* Orissa which was in no way less significant than the Gandhian struggle for freedom from Colonial rule waged by the people in the British administered districts. The work has focused upon the agrarian character of the unrest, the nature of feudal excesses, the leadership profile and the outcome of the series of disturbances in different States of Orissa during the period 1931 to 1949.

The present work has been divided into six Chapters. In Chapter One, apart from the origin and short history of the Feudatory States during the successive rule of the Mughals, Marathas and the British in Orissa, their relation with the East India Company have been discussed.

Chapter Two deals with the status and position of the Chiefs and the pattern of judicial and revenue administration which was in vogue in their respective States. Due care has been taken to show that while in most of the States the people suffered under gross mal-administration there were some exceptions like the State of Mayurbhanj where the benevolent ruling Chiefs bestowed upon their people adequate material and moral progress through the Rule of Law and timely reforms.

Chapter Three provides an account of the limited facilities available for English education in some of the States and the stunted growth of political consciousness among a small section of the population. Notwithstanding the smallness of number, the educated persons served as the vanguard of the *Prajamandal* movement in the States and openly challenged the arbitrary and ruthless nature of feudal administration.

Chapter Four forms the core of the work. In it the nature and consequences of the peasants' uprising have been discussed

threadbare in the context of local situation and All-India perspective.

Chapter Five constitutes an equally important part as it unfolds the interesting saga of the integration of the Feudatory States with the Orissa Province through various stages of political tension.

Chapter Six contains a summary of the preceding Chapters and some of my own observations on the salient characteristics of the *Prajamandal* movement and the far-reaching consequences produced by the States' integration with Orissa.

For writing this book I have made use of all the relevant documents, records, private papers, newspapers and microfilms available at the National Archives of India (New Delhi), Nehru Memorial Museum and Library (New Delhi), National Library (Calcutta), Orissa State Archives (Bhubaneswar), Assembly Library (Bhubaneswar), Samaj Office Library (Cuttack), Utkal Sahitya Samaj Library (Cuttack) and Sambalpur University Archival Cell (Jyoti Vihar). I am grateful to the authorities of the above institutions. The Indian Council of Historical Research, New Delhi have indebted me by providing necessary financial assistance to work in the aforesaid public libraries and by releasing publication subsidy for this work.

I am greatly indebted to Baisnab Charan Pattnaik, Dayananda Satpathy, Dr. Hare Krushna Mahtab, Har Mohan Pattnaik, Malati Choudhury, Naba Krushna Choudhury, Prasanna Kumar Das, Pabitra Mohan Pradhan and Surendra Nath Dwivedy, the *Prajamandal* leaders of Orissa States and the freedom fighters for the warm response to my questionnaire and personal interviews without which the void created by the paucity of written records on the inside story of States' administration could not have been properly bridged. Maharaja Pradeep Chandra Bhanj Deo of Mayurbhanj deserves my special gratitude for the keen interest he evinced in my work and certain useful suggestions he gave in times of need.

This work was originally submitted to Sambalpur University for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy under the guidance of Dr. P.K. Mishra, Professor and Head of History Department, Sambalpur University. I owe a deep sense of gratitude to him for the meticulous care and supervision with which he brought this work to its present shape.

I am also thankful to my esteemed teachers and colleagues in the Department of History, Sambalpur University, Sri N.R. Bohidar, Principal, Hirakud College and Sri Anthony Nag, Lecturer in English, G.M. College, Sambalpur for their ungrudging help, good will and co-operation.

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Jyoti Vihar S. P.
1-4-1985

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Abbreviations

A.I.S.P.C.	All-India States' Peoples' Conference.
B.J. (P).P.	Proceedings of the Lieutenant Governor of Bengal, Judicial Department (Political).
B.J.(C).P.	Proceedings of the Lieutenant Governor of Bengal, Judicial Department (Civil and Criminal).
E.S.A.	Eastern States Agency.
F.P.D.	Foreign and Political Department.
J.N.M.M.L.	Jawaharlal Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, New Delhi.
O.L.A.P.	Legislative Assembly Proceedings of Orissa.
N.A.I.	National Archives of India.
O.D.G.	*Orissa District Gazetteers.*
O.H.C.	Orissa History Congress.
O.H.R.J.	*The Orissa Historical Research Journal.*
O.S.A.	Orissa State Archives, Bhubaneswar.
P.S.O.C.S.	Political Status of Orissa and Chhatisgarh States.
R.A.B.	Report on the Administration of Bengal.
R.O.S.E.C.	Report of the Orissa States' Enquiry Committee.
S.C.C.W.O.	State Committee for Compilation of Who's Who of Freedom Workers in Orissa.
S.U.A.	Sambalpur University Archival Cell, Jyoti Vihar.

1

Historical Background

THE TERRITORIAL extent of Orissa since the remote times has undergone significant changes with the march of time. Modern Orissa constitutes nothing but the territorial nucleus of ancient Kalinga, Utkala, Odra and Kosala.[1] In the medieval times her territory roughly extended from the Ganges on the North to the Godavari on the South and Amarkantak hills on the west to the Bay of Bengal on the East.[2] Orissa lost her independence to the Afghans in 1568[3] and was subsequently ruled by the Mughals from 1592 when Raja Mansingh annexed Orissa to the empire of Akbar.[4] After the death of Aurangzeb, Orissa remained under the independent rule of the Nawabs of Bengal. The Nawabs, however, could not rule for long because of the frequent Maratha invasions. To prevent the repeated Maratha incursions on Bengal, in 1751 Nawab Aliwardi Khan ceded the territories laying between the river Suvarnarekha and the Chilka lake, covering an area of about 8,000 square miles in favour of Raghuji Bhonsle I of Nagpur.[5] Since then, Orissa remained as an appendage of Nagpur till the British conquest in 1803 when the Bhonsle surrendered Orissa to the East India Company along with seventeen Feudatory States otherwise known as the Tributary *Mahals*.[6]

Since the days of Akbar, Orissa was divided into two distinct regions by his revenue minister Raja Todar Mall, for the efficient revenue administration, *viz.* (*i*) the '*Mughalbandi*' comprising the plain and fertile lands in the coastal region and (*ii*) the '*Garjāts*' comprising the hilly region under the Oriya Chiefs who used to pay fixed annual tributes to the Emperor and in

return were recognised as the Feudatories of the Imperial Mughals.[7] This set-up continued under the Marāthas; and their successor the East India Company also brought no change in the system.

In the beginning the British appeared as humble merchants begging for permission to start trade and build factories.[8] In 1620 two English merchants came but subsequently left the place. In 1633, the real advance was made, when a band of eight English traders under Captain Ralph Cartwright established factories at Hariharpur (in the Cuttack district) and at Balasore,[9] which formed the basis of their future greatness in Bengal.[10] But, these commercial centres declined in the 18th century due to difficulties in navigation, compelling the East India Company to shift their trading centres to Hoogly.

After the battle of Buxar, Orissa came within the political interest of the Company when Lord Clive Obtained the '*Diwani*' of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa from Shah Alam on 17 August, 1765.[11] But, Orissa of the said grant comprised the single district of Midnapore as the territory of Cuttack lying to the South of the river Subarnarekha had been ceded by Nawab Aliwardi Khan to the Bhonsle of Nagpur in 1757. Since 1765 the Company's Government in Bengal wanted to have Orissa through diplomatic manoeuvring so that a safe outlet towards Madras would be secured, smuggling and frontier incursions would be checked and a revenue of about 13 lakhs of rupees annually could be collected.[12] The Bhonsles kept the British in good humour throughout the period, allowed safe passages to the contingents of British troops under Major Achmuty in 1769, Col. Pearse in 1781 and Col. Cockrell in 1790 and time and again exchanged diplomatic missions with the British. When negotiations for the occupation of Orissa failed, Lord Wellesley's aggressive policy prompted by the so-called "Francophobia" made an outbreak of hostilities with the Bhonsle inevitable.[13]

In 1803, the Company's troops took only two months from the middle of August to the middle of October to occupy Orissa after breaking down the feeble Maratha resistance. Such an easy conquest of Orissa was favoured by the help and co-operation of the Orissa *Garjāt* Chiefs. In Sambalpur the Chauhan queen Rani Ratna Kumari along with the Chiefs of Bamara, Bonai, Bargarh, Gangpur, Raigarh, Rairakhol, Sakti, Sarangarh and

Sonepur informed in writing to Major Broughton, the invading commander, about their desire to remain under the British protection.[14]

The Raja of Khurda, Rani Ratna Kumari of Sambalpur and the other *Garjāt* Chiefs were eager to forsake the yoke of servitude by ousting the Marathas through the British. The prevailing mal-administration, arbitrary imposition of taxes coupled with developing countrywide gang robbery practised by the Marathas[15] were the major factors responsible for arousing the people against the Bhonsle, whose forces failed to get the local support in their confrontation against the British at Balasore, Puri and Sambalpur. Of course the Raja of Khurda and Rani Ratna Kumari had their own axes to grind against the Bhonsle. However, soon after the fall of Barabati fort on 14 October 1803, George Harcourt and John Melville, whom Lord Wellesley had appointed as the Joint Commissioners for Orissa, opened negotiations with the Chiefs of the *Garjāts*, inducing them to acknowledge the British sovereignty. In response to their offer as many as 11 Chiefs of Orissa exchanged the Treaty Engagements.[16] According to the engagements they professed perpetual friendship with and loyality to the East India Company and agreed to pay to the Company's Government fixed annual tributes in specified instalments.[17] George Harcourt and John Melville, on behalf of the East India Company, exchanged counter engagements with these Chiefs acknowledging the annual tributes payable by them, as fixed in perpetuity and also assured that no further demand, however small, should be made.[18] Thus, by the Treaties and Engagements the Maratha paramountcy passed into the hands of the East India Company.[19]

The Company, then, signed the Treaty of Deogaon on 17 December 1803 with Raghuji Bhonsle III of Nagpur which was subsequently ractified by the Governor General-in-Council on 9 January 1804.[20] According to the second article of the treaty Raghuji Bhonsle ceded to the East India Company in perpetual sovereignty the province of Cuttack including the port and district of Balasore. And according to the tenth article of the treaty he agreed to confirm certain treaties which had been concluded incourse of the war between his Feudatories and the Company.[21]

While such events were taking place in succession Major

Forbes marched to the Barmul pass, the Key to Western Orissa, which he successfully occupied by 2 November 1803. Major Broughton, at the same time, proceeded to Sambalpur and circulated copies of agreements to the Rajas of Sambalpur on 13 December 1803 in which they were persuaded to enter into an alliance of friendship with the East India Company on the condition of payment of five gold *Mohurs* annually which would desist them from paying tributes to the Marathas.[22] In response to this and in the absence of the Chiefs, Rani Ratna Kumari of Sambalpur, Rani Laxmi Priya of Sonepur and Jagadiswar Deo, a relative of the Raja of Boud, signed the agreement of Subordination with the East India Company.[23] Accordingly, Major Broughton took over the possession of Sambalpur on 2 January 1804 by driving out the Maratha Governor Tantia Farnavis.

This occupation of Sambalpur created a tremendous problem for the East India Company in possessing it because it could not be included in the provisions of the Treaty of Deogaon that was signed on 17 December 1803. The Commissioners and the invading general Major Broughton were not prepared on political and moral grounds to make over them to the Raja of Nagpur. Observing these developments Rani Ratna Kumari and her dependency Chiefs, *viz.*, Rani Laxmi Priya of Sonepur, Raja Jaujar Singh of Raigarh, Raja Biswanath Sai of Sarangarh, Raja Veera Buddha Jena of Rairakhol, Raja Indra Sur Deva of Gangpur, Raja Tribhuban Deva of Bamara, Raja Indra Deva of Bonai and Raja Thakur Ranjit Singh, petitioned to Major Broughton on 26 March 1804 that during the Maratha rule their "families, honour and property were in continual danger" and were not willing to return to their authority rather were "sincerely and from their souls wished to remain under the British protection and were submissively willing to pay without excuse or irregularity any sum the Government (East India Company) would fix upon them".[24]

This prompted the imperialistic Governor-General Wellesley to direct the Resident at Nagpur on 18 May 1804 to inform Raghuji Bhonsle to ractify the Treaty of Deogaon by incorporating the Sambalpur Group of States to the 10th article of the Treaty within twenty-four hours, failing which war would be renewed against him.[25] The Company's Government accordingly, took all possible care in stationing and mobilising forces.

to Sambalpur against any violent designs of the Bhonsle. Lord Wellesley was withdrawn to England in July 1805 and George Barlow remained in charge of the office who under the instruction of the Home Government persuaded a policy of peace and non-intervention. He instructed Captain Roughsedge of Ramgarh Battalion to find out ways and means for peacefully transferring Sambalpur and Patna territories to the jurisdiction of the Bhonsle.[26] Captain Roughsedge with much difficulty succeeded in convincing the unwilling Rani Ratna Kumari for the rastoration on the condition of the release of her husband and son from Maratha confinement. Accordingly, the transfer agreement was signed and executed on 24 August 1806[27]. But the Bhonsle failed to occupy the restored territories till 29 November 1808 due to the resistance offered by the local Rulers and Chieftains under the leadership of Jaujar Singh, the Raja of Raigarh.[28] When the Marathas occupied Sambalpur, Rani Ratna Kumari fled away to the protection of Major Roughsedge at Chhotanagpur. She was granted a pension of rupees six hundred per month. The Sambalpur group of States remained under the Maratha suzerainty of Nagpur for another 9 years till 1817 when in the course of the Third Anglo-Maratha war, the Nagpur army was completely defeated by the East India Company at the battle of Sitabaldi on 27 November 1817. The vanquished Appa Saheb Madhoji Bhonsle in a provisional agreement ceded in perpetuity the Sambalpur group of States to the British suzerainty in 1818.

After the conquest of Orissa the Company maintained the traditional policy of keeping *Mughalbandi* separate from the *Garjāts*. *Mughalbandi* comprising the chief coastal towns of Orissa was kept under the direct administration of the British Government whereas the *Garjāts*[29] owned by the Tributary Chiefs were subjected to the treaties and engagements by which the British became their Paramount Power replacing the Marathas.[30] Thus, the East India Company while taking over the direct administration of the coastal tracts of Balasore, Cuttack and Puri preferred to retain a group of loyal supporters in the *Garjāts*. John Malcolm aptly remarked,

> If we made all India into Zillas (British districts) it was not in the nature of things that our empire should last fifty years but then if we could keep a number of native

States without political power but as loyal instruments we should exist in India as long as our naval supremacy was maintained.[31]

Very accurately the East India Company preferred to have a band of loyal and faithful Tributary States as a measure of political sagacity to serve their imperial structure. It is clear from Stirling's report that the mere fact of paying a fixed revenue to the Government did not entitle an estate to be regarded as a "Tributary". It was the political antecedent of a territory that determined its position as being called "Tributary". Thus, it was neither the annual collection of revenue, nor the total area, nor even the population which formed the basis of distinction between the estates[32] paying a fixed Jamma[33] of the *Mughalbandi* area and the Tributaries of the hill tracts. By 1809, the *Garjāts* (Tributary States) as a clas had become very much distinguished from the Zamindars paying fixed or variable revenues to the Government. As a matter of fact, the tributary status of the *Garjāt* States of Orissa was not an award given to them by the British, but they were in enjoyment of it in the preceding periods, at least from the days of Akbar. The continuance or confirmation of the traditional political status of the *Garjāt* States was more because of political expediency than anything else. Annexation of these inaccessible, undeveloped and turbulent hilly States would have created economic and political liabilities for the British without adding any advantage to their political position.

The States had no connected or authentic history and were never brought under the Central Government, but from the earliest times consisted of numerous petty principalities which were more or less independent of one another. They were first inhabited by aboriginal tribes divided into numerous tribal groups each under its own Chief.[34] They carried on incessant warfare with their neighbours, on the one hand, and the denizens of the forest, on the other. In course of time, the Aryans penetrated into those territories, who, by reason of their superior prowess and intelligence, gradually overthrew the tribal Chiefs and established themselves in their place. Tradition relates how these daring interlopers, most of whom were Rajputs from the North, came to Puri on pilgrimage and

remained behind to carve-out kingdoms and found dynasties.[35] The States acknowledged the suzerainty of the Paramount Powers; and the Mughals as well as the Marathas, never interfered with their internal administration.[36] With its rugged barriers, each State was thus permitted to work out its own growth, its boundaries expanding or contracting according to the strength or weakness of its chiefs.

Relation with the East India Company

The Feudatory States[37] of Orissa consisted of a group of twenty-six dependent territories and comprised: Athmallik, Athgarh, Angul, Bamara, Baramba Baud, Bonai, Banki, Daspalla, Dhenkanal, Gangpur, Hindol, Kalahandi, Keonjhar, Khandapara, Mayurbhanj, Narsinghpur, Nayagarh, Nilgiri, Pal-Lahara, Patna, Rairakhol, Ranpur, Sonepur, Talcher and Tigiria.[38] Of these States, Bamara, Kalahandi, Patna, Rairakhol and Sonepur were attached to the Chhatisgarh Division of the Central Provinces and Bonai and Gangpur were attached to the Chhotnagpur Division till 1905. Saraikella and Kharswan were known as Singhbhum group of States. The remaining States were known as Tributary *Mahals* who entered into treaty engagements with the Company in 1803-04. They had extended over an area of 28,125 square miles and were bounded on the north by the State of Jashpur in the Central Provinces, the district of Ranchi, Singhbhum and Midnapore; on the east by the Districts of Balasore, Cuttack and Puri; on the south by the districts of Ganjam and Vizagpatam in the Madras Presidency; and on the west by the Raipur district and Raigarh State of the Central Provinces and the district of Sambalpur in the Bengal Presidency.[39]

In the early 19th century only 19 States, otherwise known as the Tributary *Mahals*, were under the Orissa Division and the rest were in the Central Provinces up to 1905.[40] Originally, these States were ordinary estates holding exactly the same kind of *Sanads* as some of the estates in the Province, but they were kept out of the British regulations on account of their inaccessibility and the uncivilised character of the inhabitants thereof. The British Government having felt the need to conciliate the mountainous Chiefs, adopted a liberal policy to satisfy the Rajas.[41] The Rajas were exempted from the

operation of the General Regulation system prevailing in the Bengal Presidency by sections 36, 13, and 11 respectively of Regulations XII, XIII, and XIV of 1805.[42] The Rajas bound themselves with the British authorities in loyal submission and for paying an annual tribute or *peshkas*.[43] They enjoyed full freedom in their internal administration, but as subordinates of the British paramountcy, respecting the clauses of the treaty engagements. By the Regulation XIV of 1805 the Judge-cum-Magistrate of Cuttack remaided in formal charge of the Tributary *Mahals*.[44]

Robert Ker, who was the Judge-cum-Magistrate in 1805 raised the question of extension of the British regulations to the Tributary *Mahals*; but the *Sadar Diwani Adalat* and the Governor General-in-Council rejected the idea as "unnecessary".[45] The decision was probably justified because the Chiefs of the Tributary *Mahals* had agreed to pay their tributes regularly in three instalments; to which they were mainly concerned with; and the avowed policy of the Government was non-interference in their internal administration.

However, in important matters like the issue of succession of the Chiefs, the Government took decisive action to preserve peace and tranquillity in the States. In Angul after the murder of Raja Jaisingh in 1812 there was a dispute on the issue of succession between two claimants Prithivi Singh and Lokanath Singh.[46] The Government intervened in the matter and appointed an enquiry committee to investigate. John Richardson and J. Sage,[47] the enquiring officers, after thorough investigation, recommended in favour of Somanath Singh, a fourteen year old boy of the royal family for the rulership and appointed a care-taker to collect revenue and manage the administration of the *Mahal* until the Raja took over the charge.[48]

In Dhenkanal also the Government intervened over the issue of succession in 1814 and the Raja of Dhenkanal was fined for inflicting injuries on some of his subjects.[49] Thus, the Company's Government intervened on the succession disputes in Angul and Dhenkanal and ensured timely payment of State revenue.[50]

In order to check the misconduct of the Rajas by subjecting them in particular and the people in general to the control of a British Officer. Lord Moira, the Governor-General established

the office of the Superintendent of the Tributary *Mahals* in 1814.[51] The Superintendent was directed to establish such control over the conduct of the Rajas as may "prevent the commission of crimes and outrages.[52] Edward Impey, the Judge-cum-Magistrate of Cuttack, was first entrusted with the duties of Superintendent with an allowance of Rs. 500 per month. With the creation of the office of the Superintendent, the *Garjāts* were brought under closer supervision of the Government than before.

However, the local authorities always felt the necessity of introducing the British laws and regulations in the administration of the *Garjāt* States. Impey was convinced that such a step would not only benefit the Government but also would civilise the inhabitants. But the Government firmly adhered to the policy of non-interference in their internal administration. In 1814 John Richardson, the Settlement Commissioner in Orissa was appointed to enquire into the matter. In a report submitted to the Government on 20 December 1814, he observed[53]:

> The Chiefs in question are guilty of great excesses, where exempt from the influence of the British laws.

However, in the same tone he objected the extension of the British laws and regulations to the Tributary *Mahals* saying, "it will not only involve much expense, but of great evil" without any substantial advantage to the Government.[54] Because the revenues on those *Mahals* were fixed and the Government would incur much expense by the establishment of police system, good order and promotion of civilization and happiness amongst the subjects. To him, on the other hand, to leave all powers in the hands of those Chiefs was, "highly objectionable, and loudly forbidden by humanity and good policy".[55] Richardson could at least expose the tyrannical status of the Chiefs in the *Mahals* taking advantage of the British policy of non-interference in their internal administration. It indicated that the only relationship they had with the British Government was the payment of revenue in due instalments.

Edward Impey, the Superintendent proposed the introduction

of the British criminal laws in the Tributary *Mahals* and provisions for legal investigation and trials. But the Government could not accept the proposal for fear of provoking the Rajas[56]. Subsequently, however, the Regulation XI of 1816, which contained rules for the conduct of suits and claims to the rights of succession in the *Mahals*, was passed and introduced.[57] The Superintendent was empowered to hear and try all claims to the right of inheritance or succession in the *Mahals*. He was directed to be guided by the established laws and usages of the respective *Mahals*. Cases decided by the Superintendent as per the Regulation XI of 1816, could be appealed to the *Sadar Diwani Adalat* within three months of the decision. On 21 June 1816, the Government conveyed that the office of the Superintendent was constituted expressely to supply, in certain degree, the want of more regular establishments. It is not the object of the Government "to weaken the influence of the Rajas of the *Mahals* over their peasantry, and still less to interfere in the details or usages of the country.[58] The Superintendent was warned that his influence in the *Mahals* should not create any violence and outrages and if he failed to carry out the directives, the office might be abolished.[59] Thus, the management of the *Mahal* was left at the absolute will of the Rajas being controlled by the uncertain authority of the Superintendent who was strictly forbidden to involve himself in the internal administration of the Rajas.[60]

During the *Paik* rebellion of 1817, the Tributary *Mahals* remained remarkably calm. Probably by that time they could very well realise that under the aegis of the British Government, they were safe from external aggression and internal rebellion, so long they remained loyal to the Company.

By the Regulation V of 1818, a new office of the Commissioner in Cuttack was created for the better administration of Orissa and the Commissioner was entrusted with the duties of *ex-officio* Superintendent of the Tributary *Mahals*[61] in place of the Judge-cum-Magistrate of Cuttack. Robert Ker, as the new Commissioner took over the charge of Superintendent of the Tributary *Mahals*. He immediately discontinued the submission of the monthly statements, introduced by Edward Impey, of crimes and offences in the Tributary *Mahals* by the Chiefs, because he did not like to uphold a system of deception. Ker

found the records sent by the Rajas were invariably blank although serious offences were coming to the notice of the Superintendent.[62] The most significant achievement of Robert Ker's administration was that he could realise, very drastically, the arrears of tributes from the defaulting Chiefs.[63] He also banned the practice of purchasing landed estates in the *Mughalbandi* region and compelled them to obey *parwanas* of the merchants passing through their territories.

Robert Ker was succeded by William Blunt in 1820. Blunt took a keen interest in the affairs of the *Garjāts*. Citing the case of the Raja of Nayagarh who had given protection to the *paik* leader *Buxi* Jagabandhu, Blunt proposed for the introduction of police and criminal regulation into the *Mahals*.[64] But the Government disapproved the proposal and considered it to be "a matter of great risk and inconvenience".[65] The Governor General-in-Council viewed that, the interference in the affairs of the *Mahals* was to be chiefly confined to matters of a political nature, to the suppression of feuds and animosities prevailing between the Rajas of the adjoining *Mahals*, to the correction of systematic oppression and cruelty practised by any of the Rajas or by their officers towards the inhabitants, to the cognizance to any apparent gross violation by them of their duties of allegiance and subordination.[66]

In spite of such declarations, Blunt persuaded the Government to introduce certain rules in the administration of the *Mahals*. But nothing could be done except the appointments of the Joint Magistrates to officiate as Assistant Superintendents with regard to their surrounding *Mahals*.[67] Thus, the avowed policy of non-interference in the internal affairs of the Tributary *Mahals* was maintained.

In 1829, George Stockwell, the successor of Blunt, suggested for the extension of the Regulation X of 1793 by which the territories of every minor Chief would be brought into the jurisdiction of the Court of Wards, at least to secure the annual tributes of the *Mahals*.[68] Stockwell advocated that by this the Chiefs would secure their territories in a nourished condition and the people in general would be benefited most by the fixation of their rents according to some principles while under the management of the Government.[69]

The Government appreciated the suggestion because it had noticed lawlessness and anarchy in Athgarh, Dhenkanal and Narsinghpur when they were under the rule of their minor Chiefs. Moreover, arrears of tributes was a general phenomenon in those States.[70] To avoid such problems, Dhenkanal was brought under the administration of the Court of Wards in 1831.[71]

In 1931, a violent dispute cropped up between Madhab Das Mohapatra, the *sarbarakar* of Bamanghaty and Tribikram Bhanj, the Raja of Mayurbhanj upon their relative rights and privileges with respect to four *peers*[72] of Bamanghaty, the inhabitants of which were of the Kol tribe.[73] The dispute was continuing since December 1827 and it took a violent turn in 1832[74] when the four *peers* were transferred from the administrative jurisdiction of the Agent to the Governor-General to that of the Superintendent of the Tributary *Mahals* of Orissa. Madhab Das organised a rebellion against the Raja by burning villages, plundering Government *Dak*, and paralysing the communication between Calcutta and Bombay. Being intimated by Stockwell, the Government despatched military forces under Lieutenant Colonel Doreton and Captain Wilkinson to restore peace and order.[75] Madhab Das submitted to Captain Wilkinson. Stockwell suggested the imposition of strong measures against Madhab Das. But on the recommendation of Wilkinson the Government followed a conciliatory policy to restore peace in the area. This led to the resignation of Stockwell from his office.[76] However, after prolonged negotiations, the four Kol *peers* were brought under the direct control of the Government and the Raja of Mayurbhanj was permitted to retain Bamanghaty, subject to his assistance for the maintenance of the family of Madhab Das in Singhbhum. By the formation of Kolan Government Estate, Mayurbhanj State not only lost four *peers*, namely, Thai, Barbharia, Anla and Lalgarh but also Khuchung, which subsequently formed a part of Saraikela State.[77]

George Stockwell was succeeded by Robert Hunter who had to quell the disturbances in Dhenkanal in 1833 caused by the atrocious conduct of the Rani. The Rani and her two accomplices—Nityananda Sreechandan and Narayan Singh having been found guilty of killing three innocent persons and causing

grave injuries to two others were imprisoned for life at Midnapur and Cuttack jails.[78]

Henry Ricketts who officiated as the Superintendent from 1836-39 very enthusiastically took up the cause of the Tributary *Mahals* and reported to the Government to punish the Raja of Angul for the murder of six persons and the Rajas of Banki and Tigiria for invading each other's territories causing depredations and deaths on both sides.[79] But nothing was done because they could not be proved guilty. Thus, the authorities were handicapped even though they had noticed serious criminal activities of some of the Rajas. Thereupon, Ricketts pleaded that as the Government was receiving handsome revenue from the Tributary *Mahals* like that from the *Mughalbandi* area, the inhabitants of the former should be protected by British laws and regulations, otherwise the Campany's Government should not be a mere spectator to the growing plunder, lawlessness and unhealthy relationship between neighbouring States.[80] Ricketts was in favour of increased interference, and the establishment of a defined system of management.

The Governor General-in-Council did not appreciate the views of Ricketts and observed that "this would involve more interference than desirable" and they "would tend injuriously to weaken the influence of the Rajas over their peasantry".[81] The Governor General-in-Council further said that the Superintendent must have a discretionary power of interference in any "heinous crime" brought to his notice and in punishing the Rajas for misconduct, he must obtain the final orders from the Government.[82] Such attitude of the Government was responsible to encourage atrocious activities by the Tributary Chiefs. Some of them became notorious for murder.

In 1840, A.J.M. Mills succeeded Henery Ricketts. Mills' administration was marked by vigorous actions in the Tributary *Mahals*. He brought Nilgiri under his direct jurisdiction because of the mal-administration of the Rani, who was acting as the guardian of the minor Chief.

In 1840, Jagannath Srichandan, the Raja of Banki was found guilty of the murder of Raghunath Paramguru, one of his priests and his son. Moreover, the people of Banki had earlier petitioned before the Superintendent against the tyrannical and arbitrary rule of Jagannath Srichandan. Mills took-up the

matter very seriously and recommended the Government for drastic punishment like imprisonment for life against the Chief and the confiscation of Banki which would be followed by the direct management of the Government.[83] The Government appreciated the recommendation and Banki was kept under the jurisdiction of the Collector of Cuttack. The confiscation of Banki caused great alarm among the Rajas whose administration was of similar nature and served as a warning.[84] For the people of Banki, however, it was a great moral victory.

Mills, however, failed like his predecessors in his attempt to persuade the Government to extend the British laws and regulations in the Tributary *Mahals*.[85] The Government reiterated that :

> the Superintendent should not interfere much between the Rajas and their tenants weakening the influence of the former, but to interfere with their authority only in cases of a political nature, and for the prevention of cruelty, oppression and crimes of an aggravated nature.[86]

Like Banki, the Government took drastic action against the Raja of Angul leading to the confiscation of the *Mahal* in 1848. Raja Somanath Singh of Angul was an intelligent but eccentric man. In 1846, he attacked and forcibly took possession of a village of the neighbouring State, Hindol. For this act the Government fined him Rs. 3,000. But he protested on the ground that he has purchaged the village from the Raja of Hindol who, on the other hand, denied of any sale. The Government cancelled the sale on grounds that while alienating any portion of their territories the *Mahals* were required to take prior permission. Hence, Raja Somanath Singh was asked to pay the fines and beg forgiveness for his misconduct.

Secondly, Somanath Singh was found guilty of espousing the cause of the rebellious Khonds of Baud in protesting against the suppression of the *Meriah* system.[87] To penalise him the Government despatched troops under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Campbell who succeeded in capturing the Raja within a few days. Somanath Singh was sent to Hazaribagh as a State prisoner and Angul was confiscated to be managed directly by the Collector of Cuttack.[88] Thus, within eight years two Tributary

Mahals of Orissa were confiscated reducing the total number of the Tributary *Mahals* of Orissa to seventeen.[89]

Mills was succeeded by F. Gouldsbury. He too was in favour of enforcing British rules in the Tributary *Mahals* in order to remove the anomalies existing in Judicial administration. He was pained to observe the whimsical administration prevailing in the Tributary *Mahals* causing great inconvenience to the inhabitants. Every thing was left to the discretion of the Rajas who would distinguish between the ordinary crimes and 'heinous crimes' so that the Superintendent would be invited to deal with the heinous crimes. Normally, the Rajas did not like to be interfered in their internal administration. But the Government of Bengal informed him that the prevalent system did not "call for any material change at present".[90]

Thus, during the period of Company's rule the hopes of extending uniform rules in the administration of the *Garjāts* could not be materialised. The repeated suggestions of the Superintendents fell into the deaf ears of the authorities. This made the Chiefs absolute in their respective possessions. They could officially imprison, whip and fine the people and could kill them unofficially. During the Revolt of 1857, the Tributary *Mahals* of Orissa remained quiet. Instead of joining the revolt against the British Government, they proved to be sincere in their loyalty to the Paramount Power, and some of them were found loyally espousing the British cause. The Raja of Mayurbhanj rendered good service during the Mutiny[91] which prompted the Political Officer to report to the Government:

> the Raja of Mayurbhanj has been throughout consistent in his professions of adherence to the Government and that he was sincere has been proved by the very excellent letters addressed to his rebellious son-in-law, the Raja of Porahat, which were found at Porahat by Lieutenant Birch, the Senior Assistant Commissioner of Singhbhum.[92]

On the recommendations of the Political Officer, in 1860 the Government of India conferred upon Raja Jadunath Bhanj of Mayurbhanj the title of Maharaja Bahadur with a valuable Khilat, in recognition of his services during the Mutiny.[93]

It is interesting to observe that perhaps as a matter of policy the bigger and powerful *Mahals* were charged lesser amount of tributes than the small and weaker ones. This is borne from the fact that when Mayurbhanj and Keonjhar with areas of 4,243 and 3,096 square miles of territories paid Rs. 1,001 and Rs. 2,793-11 *annas* respectively; Khandapara and Nilgiri with areas of 244 and 278 square miles paid Rs. 3,948-5 *annas* and Rs. 5,617-6 *annas* respectively.[94]

Relation with the British Crown

The Mutiny and the great revolt of 1857 demonstrated the values of the "Yellow Patches" to the British Government. Canning had gratefully acknowledged the role of the States as "break-waters in the storm which would have swept over us in one great wave".[95] It was realised that the States could play a role of bulwark against the forces of Indian nationalism. This led to a radical change in the British policy towards the States, which found expression in 1858. Queen Victoria's proclamation promised, "We shall respect the rights, dignity and honour of native princes as our own".[96] The British Paramountcy was directly assumed by the Queen in 1858 in place of the Company and this marked the beginning of a new chapter in the history of the *Garjāts*. It was also thought that the growing administrative unity between the States and the rest of India would detract from their role as break-waters. Attempt was made "to convert the Indian States into an Indian Ulster by pressing constitutional theories into service"[97] Crown as the sole link between the Central Government and the States was systematically developed.[98]

The Crown's representative, the Viceroy, examined the position and status of the *Garjāt* Chiefs and conferred on the Rajas new *Sanads* in 1862. The new *Sanads* preserved the dynastic continuity of the Rajas by guaranteeing them the right of adoption. It was effected because the denial of the right of adoption, and the annexation of the native States on failure of natural heirs, were considered to be the major causes of the Mutiny. In those *Sanads*, for the first time the *Mahals* were mentioned as "States" which remained unaltered.[99]

However, on 25 November 1874, Sir Richard Temple, the Lieutenant Governor of Bengal issued revised *Sanads* to the

Chiefs on behalf of the Viceroy in a *Durbar* at Cuttack conferring on them the hereditary title of Raja.[100] On presenting the *Sanad* the Lieutenant Governor stated that the ceremony was a

> proof of the goodwill of the British Government towards you; and that you will hereby receive fresh encouragement to preserve in the discharge of your duty as loyal Feudatories; and as just rulers over the people who dwell in your territories.[101]

He further said,

> Keep your affairs in your own hands and under your own eyes, and do not leave too much to your ministers and Agents. Continue to make moderate and equitable settlements with your ryots. Educate your people. . . . In all things follow the advice of your excellent Commissioner, whom you may always regard as your best friend.[102]

Disturbances in Baud

In 1862, a Kondh rebellion broke out in Baud on account of a dispute over the possession of a Kondh tract called *Pachera* between the Rajas of Baud and Sonepur.[103] Though originally, the *Pachera* belonged to the Raja of Sonepur as a marriage dowry and in 1830 the Superintendent of the Orissa Tributary *Mahals* recognised the legal possession of the Raja of Sonepur over the *Pachera*. The Kondhs of the neighbouring tract of Bara-Bhaya Desa which was under the possession of Baud agitated and demanded that the *Pachera* being inhabited by their tribal folks should be attached to them and kept under the jurisdiction of the Raja of Baud. Accordingly, they appealed to the Raja of Baud. But when the Raja of Baud did not pay any heed to their demand the Kondhs became rebellious.[104] When the Raja was on a tour to Kumghat the Kondhs kidnapped the Raja as a prisoner by killing five of his paiks on the spot. However, the Raja was later on rescued by a troop of constables of Khajarpara Tahasil.[105] Subsequently, the Superintendent of the Tributary *Mahals* despatched Major Smith and Lieutenant Dolmage to bring the situation under control. They

succeeded in their mission by arresting the rebel leaders Narayan Mallick and Balaram Mallick.[106] The leaders were tried and sentenced to rigorous imprisonment varying from one year to fourteen years. R.N. Shore, the Superintendent held the Raja of Baud responsible for the disturbance and imposed on him a fine of Rs. 1,000.[107]

Athmallik

In 1863, disturbances broke out in Athmallik on account of an internal quarrel between the Raja and one of his subordinates, named Bala Biswal. The disturbance cropped-up when Bala Biswal refused to pay the rents of his encroached lands.[108] Subsequently, the Raja with the permission of the Superintendent, expelled Bala Biswal from Athmallik.[109] But after sometime the latter came back to the State and resorted to devastating activities with the help of some likeminded people.[110] In course of his violent activities he burnt a large number of villages. The Superintendent proceeded towards Athmallik with a force of 100 and succeeded in capturing Bala Biswal and his followers. Bala Biswal was inflicted with 14 years of rigorous imprisonment, and his followers were also imprisoned.[111]

Mayurbhanj

In 1866, violent disturbances broke out in Bamanghaty.[112] The root cause of the disturbance was the inefficiency of the Chief of Mayurbhanj, Raja Sreenath Bhanj, who was highly unpopular and despised by the people for his autocratic and oppressive administration. He was also under the influence of "incapable" and totally "ignorant" officers.[113] The State was submerged in anarchy and lawlessness. The settlement of land revenue was highly flexible and oppressive. There was neither fixed rents, nor fixed time of payment; some paid twice and some nothing at all.[114] The system of collection of rents was oppressive. The defaulter's properties like cows, oxen and buffaloes were forcibly sold away.[115] Thereby, the subjects felt annoyed and their disaffection became widespread. Adding fuel to the fire, the Raja violated the age old customs of the Santals by depriving their Chiefs certain dues payable by the tribals. When the Raja exacted those dues for himself the Santal Chiefs took recourse to open rebellion. The country was plundered and devastated by

the tribals under the leadership of Bhunda, Chakra, and Kartika.[116] The Raja failed to quell the disturbances leading to the intervention by the British. The authority of the Raja, as per the recommendation of Lieutenant Colonel E.T. Dalton, the Commissioner of Chhotanagpur, was suspended and Dr. W. Hayes, the Deputy Commissioner of Singhbhum was despatched with a police force on 7 July 1866.[117] Hayes brought the situation under control by arresting the leaders, Bhunda, Chakra, and Kartika with their arms. He was vested with the civil and criminal powers in Bamanghaty till absolute peace and tranquillity was restored in the pargana. Raja Sreenath Bhanj, in vain, protested against this, since the measure impaired his prestige very much. During the administration of Dr. Hayes, people became happy and contented. Fresh land revenue settlement was made and illegal impositions were abolished. Raja Sreenath Bhanj, in the meanwhile, was succeeded by his nephew Krushna Chandra Bhanj, and on 1 April 1878, Bamanghaty was restored to the new Chief, as he was in no way connected with the mismanagement of his uncle.[118]

Keonjhar

Succession dispute cropped up in Keonjhar after the death of Maharaja Gadadhar Bhanj on 22 March 1861 at Tribeni on the Ganges.[119] The two claimants to the '*Guddi*' were Dhananjaya Bhanj, the son of a *Phulbibāhi*[120] of the Raja and Brundaban Bhanj, the grandson of the Raja of Mayurbhanj. The Superintendent, however, recognised Dhananjaya Bhanj as the legitimate successor of Gadadhar Bhanj in accordance with the "*Pachees Sawal*"[121] by which succession in Orissa States was governed.[122] An appeal against the decision was dismissed by the Lieutenant Governor of Bengal and subsequently by the High Court.[123]

The succession of Dhananjaya Bhanj witnessed a strong armed opposition organised by Rani Bisnu Priya in support of the rival claimant Brundaban Bhanj. The tribes like Bhuyans and Jwangs sent delegation to Calcutta to represent in favour of Brundaban Bhanj.[124] In the meanwhile Ratna Naik, the tribal leader waged an armed rebellion; he plundered and burnt the houses at the headquarters, over-powered the police guards, entered the palace, seized the *Dewan* and some of the

officers, and carried them as captives to the hills. The *Dewan* was killed and others were detained. They set up a provisional Government and took over the management of the States.[125] The Raja being helpless applied to the Government for immediate aid. Dr. W. Hayes was sent to suppress the rebellion and save the Raja. Though he achieved some initial successes, subsequently he was also captured and kept under confinement by the rebels.

Consequently, Poole, the Assistant Superintendent of *Garjāt* police, was sent with a troop of 40 constables to rescue Hayes.[126] T.E. Ravenshaw, the Superintendent of the Tributary *Mahals* also reached Keonjhar on 7 July, and assumed the charge of affairs. Ratna Naik was arrested and the rising was suppressed. The trial that followed resulted in the conviction of 183 rebels.[127] Ratna Naik and four others were sentenced to death. Twenty-seven were awarded the transportation for life and the rest were imposed with rigorous imprisonment.[128] Dhananjaya Bhanj was safely installed on the throne of Keonjhar and by 1878 he had become very much popular among the tribals being guided and advised by Lieutenant John Stone.[129] The Bhuyans and Jwangs paid their accustomed homage to Dhananjaya Bhanj.

But subsequently, Dhananjaya Bhanj turned to be extravagant and oppressive. He exacted several illegal taxes and abwabs from the people which caused great discontent among the tribals.[130] The tribals convened a *Panchayat* at Pawani to check the autocratic attitude of the Raja. But the Raja to forestall the move against him, sent his Assistant Manager, Bichitrananda Das to arrest several leading members present at the meeting.[131] At this Dharani Dhar Naik[132] took up the leadership of the tribals and with an organised mob of about 1,200 insurgents, attacked the village of Chamukpur on 22 May 1891. The village was thoroughly looted by the insurgents. Having failed to resist them the Raja fled to Anandpur wherefrom he appealed to the Superintendent for assistance.[133] G. Toynbee, the Superintendent despatched Dawson with a troop of 150 armed police men.[134] By the time Dawson reached Keonjhar, the insurgents had captured the palace, plundering the treasury, releasing the convicts in the jail and taking Fakir Mohan Senapati, the Manager as prisoner. Dawson promptly

suppressed the rebellion with the help of the local officers, Government police and the Raja of Saraikella.[135] Dharani Dhar Naik surrendered to Dawson. After being tried by G. Toynbee, the Superintendent, the insurgents were sentenced to rigorous imprisonment varying from two years to seven years.[136] The significant statement of Dharani Dhar Naik in this connection was,

> I am not sorry for my seven years imprisonment but I am happy that the people will be relieved of the oppression.[137]

Even though, temporarily the agitation was suppressed, the ill feeling of the people against the Raja did not end. Nanda Kishore Das was appointed as Government Agent to advise the Raja and to establish a sound administration.[138] But nothing could bring harmony among the tribals. Early in 1893 the tribals renewed their revolts and committed acts of violence against the Government and State officials and plundered villages. When the Government attempted to suppress them by coercive measures they preferred to large scale migration.[139] Thereafter, the Government appointed H.P. Wylly to enquire into the causes of disturbances. He found the Bhuyans having certain legitimate grievances and recommended the Raja to be temporarily relieved of his powers and the State administration be taken over by the British Government. As a result, the Lieutenant Governor of Bengal appointed H.P. Wylly to administer Keonjhar.[140]

Wylly tried to redress the manifold grievances of the people of Keonjhar. Settlement of land revenue was concluded on terms agreeable to and accepted by both parties. The question of personal service claimed by the Raja, out of which the rebellion sprang up, was settled.[141] In 1894, Wylly was succeeded by R.T. Dundas who was again relieved by Durgadas Mukherjee in 1895 when the settlement operation was in progress.[142] This system of administration continued till 1899 when the Raja's authority over the State was restored.[143]

Narsinghpur

In 1878, disturbances cropped up in the State of Narsinghpur between the Raja and the subjects when the Raja began exacting

enhanced cesses.[144] The Superintendent had to send his Assistant to reconcile the differences between the Raja and his ryots. Satisfactory reconciliation was effected and on the recommendation of the Assistant Superintendent, a *Dewan* nominated by the Superintendent was appointed.[145] The Raja was cautioned to follow the advice of the *Dewan* and to strictly observe the arrangement made by the Assistant Superintendent, failing which his authority would be suspended.[146]

Daspalla

Since 1873, the date of succession of Raja Chaitanya Deo Bhanj of Daspalla the history of the State was replete with frequent disturbances and conflicts between the Raja and the subjects. He was an imperfectly educated, inexperienced and ill-tempered ruler. Being highly extravagant and finding the State income quite inadequate he started exacting illegal cesses without paying any regard to the capacity of the subjects. This gave rise to bitter feeling between the Raja and his subjects.[147] When the Superintendent (T.E. Ravenshaw) heard about the general discontent, he deputed his Assistant, Babu Hare Krushna Das, to fix the revenue. The Assistant Superintendent submitted a detailed report on the administration of Daspalla. Ravenshaw personally went there and appointed a committee called Raj Committee to carry on the administration of the State. It consisted of five members: the Raja, his brother Radhakant Deo, his uncle Nilkanth, Dewan Lokanath Brahmachari, and the Accountant Damodar Chaupatnaik. But the Raja, after few years, got into friction with the members and continued his mal-administration.[148] Subsequently, the Superintendent appointed seven Managers successively between 1880-1891 with the approval of the Lieutenant Governor to aid and advise the Raja, in the admistration of the State.[149] But the Raja could not manage himself with any of the Managers which led the Superintendent to suggest the Government to suspend the Raja from his authority. Accordingly, an Agent was appointed to administer the affairs of the State in the name of the Raja and in all matters he was responsible to the Government and not to the Raja. On 3 December 1894, Munshi Mahammad Akbar, the Manager of Pal-Lahara joined as the Government Agent in Daspalla.[150] Chaitanya Deo Bhanj was succeeded by his younger brother Narayan Deo

Bhanj in 1896. As the new Raja was considered efficient, the services of the Agent were withdrawn after the completion of the Settlement work of the State.[151]

Athgarh

The death of Srikaran Bhagirathi Bebarta Pattnaik, the ruler of Athgarh on 21 September 1893 was followed by a period of succession dispute between his uterine brother, Raghunath San Samanta and his illegitimate son Srinath Gambit Samanta[152]. At this H.G. Cooke, the Superintendent intervened into the matter and in accordance with the answer No. 12 of the *Pachees Sawal*, decided in favour of Raghunath San Samanta, because the *Pachees Sawal* provided that a legitimate brother would succeed in preference to a *phulbibahi's* son (illegitimate son). The Lieutenant Governor recognised the claim of Raghunath San Samanta as Srinath Gambit Samanta failed to prove that any legal marriage took place between his mother Annapurna and the late Raja.[153]

Nayagarh

In 1893, conflict cropped up between Raja Raghunath Singh Mandhata of Nayagarh and the *Dewan* Khetribar Singh. When Raghunath Singh Mandhata succeeded, he replaced the *Dewan* of his predecessor Khetribar Singh by Gopal Santra.[154] Being ousted from office Khetribar sought the help of the Raja of Khandapara who happend to be his relative and a staunch enemy of the Raja of Nayagarh. Khetribar Singh organised a Meli[155] against the Durbar alleging that Gopal Santra was autocratic and oppressive officer. The Raja of Khandapara delivered an inflammatory speech to the insurgents at a village, Gutnitolla and assured them moral and material help against the Raja of Nayagarh. The insurgents attempted to murder the Raja and the *Dewan*. At this, Sudam Charan Nayak, the Assistant Superintendent reached Nayagarh and after proper investigation made a settlement by ousting Gopal Santra and appointing Khetribar Singh in the service of the State. But the administration of the State was placed in the hands of Darpanarayan Das, the Manager. This arrangement was subsequently disliked by Khetribar Singh who started fomenting disorder in the State. Sudam Charan Nayak again came to investigate the

matter. The charges against Khetribar Singh led to his conviction and he was sentenced with one year's rigorous imprisonment and a fine of Rs. 200 imposed under the section 417, penal code.[156]

The imprisonment of Khetribar Singh was highly resented by his sympathisers. The *melias*[157] looted the Durbar, market and indiscriminately murdered as many as 26 persons to give an impression to the Government that the murder took place because of the mismanagement and atrocity of the Raja, as to get him removed from the throne. This idea was injected by the Raja of Khandapara and Khetribar Singh.[158] To quell the disturbances, detachments of military police were despatched to Nayagarh. The Magistrate of Puri and the Assistant Superintendent succeeded in restoring peace and order by March 1895. The capture of Arjun Paikrai, the leader of the *melias* marked the end of the disturbance. The trial convicted 54 *melias* and Arjun Paikrai was transported for life.[159]

Khandapara

The suppression of the Nayagarh *Meli* was followed by drastic punishment. The Raja of Khandapara was exposed as the brain behind the disturbances. H.G. Cooke, the Superintendent, recommended that the Raja should be removed from Khandapara for one year and pay half of the cost of damage occurred due to the *meli*.[160] However, to this the Lieutenant Governor recommended to the Government of India a lenient punishment which was accepted by the Government. Accordingly, the Raja of Khandapara was required to reside at Cuttack for a period of six months. During the period of his suspension, a Government officer with a handsome salary was appointed as the Manager of the State.[161]

Thus, during the second half of the 19th century, the history of the *Garjāts* of Orissa was full of incidents chiefly in connection with successions which led to intervention by the British where the Rajas were incapable to quell the disturbances. However, in 1888, a significant change in administration took place when the Calcutta High Court gave the ruling[162] that the 17 Tributary *Mahals* of Orissa did not form a part of British India. In consequence of this decision, revised *Sanads* were issued to all the Chiefs, defining their status, powers and position.[163] Such

Sanads were issued by Lord Elgin from Simla on 27 October 1894 providing definite limitations on the exercise of the criminal and civil powers.

When Andrew Fraser became the Lieutenant Governor of Bengal in 1903, he took a keen interest in the affairs of the States of Orissa. He carefully studied the causes of the mis-government, leading to the rising of the people in the States and the consequent intervention of the British Government. He strongly recommended the appointment of a Political Agent for the Tributary *Mahals* of Orissa like that of Chhatisgarh Division.[164] The Political Agent would be a friend, advisor and colleague to the Chiefs; in making them understand their responsibility in the efficient administration of their States and he supervised their administration. In April 1906. Cobden Ramsay was appointed as the Political Agent for the Tributary States of Orissa. Both the Chiefs and the Political Agent remained under the official supervision of the Commissioner of Orissa Division. It is worthy to note in this context that before the appointment of Cobden Ramsay in 1906 as the Political Agent of the Orissa Feudatory States the numerical strength of the Orissa States had increased to twenty-four in place of 17 Tributary *Mahals* of the preceding century.[165] In 1905, at the time of the partition of Bengal, the five Oriya-speaking States of the Central Province, *i.e.*, Bamara, Kalahandi, Patna, Rairakhol and Sonepur and two other States, *i.e.*, Bonai and Gangpur of the Chhotanagpur Division were transferred to the Orissa Division.[166] The case of the other two Orissa States, Saraikella and Kharswan has been dealt with separately.[167]

Being dis-affected by the limitations of the *Sanad* of 1894, the Chiefs of Orissa States submitted a memorial to the Viceroy under the leadership of Maharaja Sri Ram Chandra Bhanj of Mayurbhanj. Madhusudan Das, the eminent lawyer of Orissa, had drafted the memorial presented by Chiefs.[168] Consequently, revised *Sanads* were issud by the Viceroy Lord Minto in 1908, replacing the limitations of criminal powers laid down in the *Sanad* of 1894 by liberal clauses. All the twenty-four Chiefs were recognised as the Feudatories of the British Government. They were required to conform to the advice of the Commissioner on all important matters at all times and to the instructions of the Lieutenant Governor of Bengal. The Political Agent was

appointed under the control of the Commissioner to supervise and regulate the twenty-four Chiefs of Orissa States. Saraikella and Kharswan were transferred to the jurisdiction of the Political Agent of Orissa Feudatory States from Chhotanagpur Division by the Lieutenant Governor-in-Council[169] This addition of Saraikella and Kharswan increased the number of Orissa States to twenty-six. In 1922, the power, position and status of the Political Agent was enhanced and he was designated as the Political Agent and Commissioner of Orissa Feudatory States.[170] This was done to bring the States into closer touch with the Governer General-in-Council. An Assistant Political Agent was also appointed to help the Political Agent and Commissioner.[171]

As the Simon Commission was set up in 1927 for British India, similarly the British Parliament appointed the Buttler Committee in 1928 to deal with the administrative system of the native States of India. The Maharaja of Mayurbhanj, Rajas of Hindol, Nilgiri and Talcher had been to Bombay on 15 April 1928 to discuss the matter with the Buttler Commitee. In response to the memorandum, separately[172] submitted by the Maharaja of Mayurbhanj, the Buttler Committee recommended the admission of the Maharaja to the Chamber of Princes. However, on the findings of the Buttler Committee, the Eastern States Agency came into existence on 1 April 1933 which comprised the twenty-six Feudatory States of Orissa and fourteen States from the Central Provinces. It was done for greater control and better management of those States under the direct control of the Government of India.[173] The Governor General, otherwise knows as the Crown's representative, exercised his control over these States through the Agent to the Governor General and he was stationed at Ranchi. The Agent to the Governor General was sudordinated by two Political Agents, one for the twenty-six States of Orissa with Headquarters at Sambalpur and the other for the fourteen States of the Central Provincess with Headquarters at Raipur. Subsequently, with the addition of two more States of Bengal, *i.e.*, Tripura and Cooch Behar, the Headquarters of the Agency Agent was shifted from Ranchi to Calcutta and the designation was also changed from the Agent to the Governor General to that of Resident.

In 1936, Eastern States Agency was divided into three different Agencies under the same Resident, namely, Bengal States Agency, Orissa States Agency and Chhatisgarh States Agency. This time the Orissa States Agency represented only twenty-three States out of twenty-six because Mayurbhanj was included in the Bengal States Agency and Kalahandi and Patna in the Chhatisgarh States Agency as reconstituted in 1936, contained the following group of States.

Bengal States Agency with its Headquarters at Calcutta and the Secretary to the Agent to the Governor General was its *ex-officio* Political Agent. The States in this Agency were, (1) Cooch-Behar, (2) Mayurbhanj and (3) Tripura.

The Chhatishgarh States Agency included 16 States, *i.e.*, Bastar, Changbhakar, Chuikhandan, Jashpur, Kalahandi, Kaner, Kawardha, Khairagarh, Korea, Nandagaon, Patna, Raigarh, Sakti, Sarangarh, Surguja and Udaipur. The Political Agent was stationed at Raipur in the Central Provinces.

The Orissa States Agency whose Political Agent was stationed at Sambalpur comprised of 23 States, *viz.*, Athgarh, Athmallik, Bamara, Baramba, Baud, Bonai, Daspalla, Dhenkanal, Gangpur, Hindol, Keonjhar, Kharswan, Khandapara, Narsinghpur, Nayagarh, Nilgiri, Pal-Lahara, Rairakhol, Ranpur, Saraikella, Sonepur, Talcher and Tigiria.

The Resident stationed at Calcutta was controlled by the Political Department of the Government of India. Such an arrangement continued till the end of the British rule in the country. In 1937, revised *Sanads* were issued and the status of the States were redefined with the sole objective of removing various inequalities, mainly arising from their grouping and regrouping under different administrative units. They were divided into three classess;[174] A.B.C. considering their status, size and source of income; and an uniform status was accorded to the states of the same class, which has been detailed in the subsequent chapter.[175] 'A' class comprised 11 States, *viz.*, Mayurbhanj, Saraikella, Patna, Kalahandi, Keonjhar, Gangpur, Dhenkanal, Sonepur, Bamara, Nayagarh and Baud; Class 'B' comprised 12 States, *viz.*, Athgarh, Athmallik, Khandapara, Kharswan, Narsinghpur, Baramba, Bonai, Daspalla, Hindol, Nilgiri, Rairakhol and Talcher; Class 'C' comprised of three States, such as, Pal-Lahara, Ranpur and Tigiria. Out of these, Mayurbhanj was

the biggest and Tigiria was the smallest. This arrangement continued till 1947 when the British rule in India came to an end.

Saraikella and Kharswan

Saraikella and Kharswan had an area of 449 square miles and 153 square miles respectively and both the States were exempted from the payment of tributes to the British Government.

These two States were never under the rule of the Mughals nor even under the Marathas and were never to pay any tribute to any Government.[176] They were not even acquired by the British Government by conquest or cession from the Marathas, but they acknowledged the British supremacy voluntarily.[177] Both the States were kept under the administrative jurisdiction of the South West Frontier Agency with Headquarters at Ranchi. Even though the Chiefs of these two States enjoyed better status and position when they came in contract with the British they were regarded, by the British

> as mere *Zamindars* paying tributes, with peculiar powers of internal administration which may be reduced or abolished at pleasure.[178]

These States were regarded as private property; hence, they were not granted adoption *Sanad* or the hereditary title of Rajas.[179]

In 1862, the Sambalpur Group of States, having no better status than Saraikella and Kharswan, were transferred from the administrative jurisdiction of the South West Frontier Agency to that of the Chief Commissioner of the Central Provinces.[180] On the recommendation of the Chief Commissioner of the Central Provinces, the Government of India in their letter No. 289 dated 3 April 1865 classified these transferred group of States as "Feudatories" and issued new *Sanads* providing them better status and position.

At the time of the partition of Bengal in 1905, the Oriya Feudatory States in the Central Provinces, *viz.*, Bamara, Sonepur, Patna, Rairakhol and Kalahandi otherwise known as the Sambalpur group of States were transferred to Bengal and formed the Orissa group of States. Since then, they were administered by the Political Officers of Orissa Feudatory States.[181]

Bonai and Gangpur were transferred by the Commissioner of Chotanagpur to Orissa and were immediately given *Sanads* classifying them as Feudatories like the Sambalpur group of States.[182]

Seeing the better status of the Orissa group of States, the Chiefs and the people of Saraikella and Kharswan resented much. Though geographically not belonging to the Chotanagpur plateau nor historically connected with Chotanagpur in the past, nor linguistically or culturally linked up with Chotanagpur, the only States of the South West Frontier Agency that were still left with the Commissioner of Chotanagpur were the two Oriya States of Saraikella and Kharswan, whose Chiefs enjoyed the status of mere *Zamindars*. Both the Chiefs, therefore, jointly submitted a memorial to the Government of India in 1915 asking for immediate transfer of their States to Orissa under the Political Agent of Orissa at Sambalpur. Both the memorialists represented that, their States were never under the Mughals or the Marathas, they never had to pay tribute to any Government, were not acquired by the British either through conquest or cessasion from the Marathas. Since they had acknowledged the British supremacy voluntarily they could rightfully claim to be transferred to the Political Agent of Sambalpur on the ground that all other Oriya States had been placed under that Agency excepting them.[183]

The points so fervently prayed for, had some immediate results. After going fully into the past history and all other consideration of language, culture and economy, the Government of Bihar and Orissa found that great injustice was being done to these States by not linking them up with other feudatory States of Orissa. Finally, the States were placed under the direct supervision of the Political Agent of Orissa Feudatory States by the Lieutenant Governer-in-Council in their Order No. 1307 R. dated 17 June 1916.[184] Since then they were treated as Orissa Group of States and *Sanads* were issued defining them as the Feudatory Chiefs of Orissa.

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3. *OHRJ*, Vol. III, No. 4, p. 165.
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4. R.D. Banerjee, *History of Orissa*, Vol. II, (Calcutta, 1930), p. 26.
Raja Mansingh remained as the Governor of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa till 1605 (the death of Akbar), suppressing the Afghans and consolidating the rule of the Mughals.
5. Fifth Report from the Selection Committee on the Affairs of East India Company, 1812, p. 245.
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6. *Ibid.*
7. A. Stirling, *An Account (Geographical, Statistical and Historical) of Orissa, Proper or Cuttack*, (London, 1846), p. 32.
8. L.S.S. O.'Malley, *op. cit.*, p. 151.
9. *Ibid.*
10. W.W. Hunter, *History of Orissa*, Vol. II, (London, 1872), p. 39.
"True to our national character, we settled in Orissa as merchants long before we made our appearance as ruler."
11. *Ibid.*
L.S.S. O'Malley, *op. cit.*, p. 150.
M.K. Roy, *Princely States and the Paramount Power*, (Delhi, 1981), p. 2.
K.M. Patra, *op. cit.*, p. xiii.
G.W. Forrest (ed.), *Selection from the State Papers of the Governor-General of India, Warren Hastings*, Vol. I, (London, 1910), p. 2.
12. B.S. Das, *Studies in the Economic History of Orissa from Ancient times to 1833*, (Calcutta, 1978), p. 137.
13. *Ibid.*
14. H.N. Sinha, (ed.), *Selections from Nagpur Residency Records*, Vol. I, pp. 54-58.
They wrote "Indeed our families, honour and property were in continual danger under them (Marathas)".

15. W W. Hunter, *A Statistical Account of Bengal*, (1977), Vol. XVIII, p. 193.
    B.C. Ray, *op. cit.*, p. 5.
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    "The Maratha administration was fatal to the welfare of the people and the prosperity of the country, and exhibits a picture of misrule, anarchy, weakness, rapacity and violence combined, which makes one wonder how society can have been kept together under so calamitous a tyranny."
16. C.U. Aitchison, *A Collection of Treaties of Engagements and Sanads relating to India and Neighbouring Countries*, Vol. I, (Calcutta, 1909), pp. 188-90.
    The Chiefs were of Athgarh, Bamara, Dhenkanal, Hindol, Khandapara, Narsinghpur, Nayagarh, Nilgiri, Ranpur, Talcher and Tigiria.
17. S.L. Maddox, *Final Report on the Survey and Settlement of the Province of Orissa, 1890-1900* (Calcutta, 1900), p. 409.
18. C.U. Aitchison, *loc. cit.*, p. 189.
19. S.C. De, (ed.), *Guide to Orissan Records*, Vol. II, (Bhubaneswar, 1961), p. 11.
20. C.U. Aitchison, *op. cit.*, Vol. III, (Calcutta, 1909), pp. 97-99.
21. *Ibid.*, Vol. I, pp. 415-17.
22. *Selections from Nagpur Reidency Records*, Vol. I, p. 26.
23. *Ibid.*
24. *Ibid.*, pp. 57-58.
25. *Ibid.*, p. 60.
26. *Ibid.*, pp. 67, 68.
27. *Ibid.*, p. 88.
28. *Ibid.*
29. To the early British administrators the *Garjāts* were known as Tributary *Mahals*.
30. However, the Sambalpur group of States came within the orbit of the East India Company after the defeat of Apa Saheb, the Raja of Nagpur and Maratha Paramount Power in Sambalpur, in the battle of Seetabuldee when he ceded Sambalpur and her dependencies by a provisional agreement made in January 1818.
    Nagpur Residency Records, Vol. I, p. 236.
31. H.K. Mahtab, (ed.), *History of Freedom Movement in Orissa*, Vol. V, (Cuttack, 1959), p. 15.
32. Estates were also popularly known as *Zamindaris*.
33. *Jamma*. The total amount of the rent or revenue payable by a cultivator or a Zamindar, including all cesses, as well as land-tax.
34. Of the 427 tribal communities recognised in India, 62 were found scattered all over the *Garjārs* of Orissa having their divergent culture and tradition. They can chiefly be divided on the basis of their culture, including economic development into three categories: the primitive, the transitional, and the assimilate. The primitive includes

the tribal races like: Kondh, Langia-Saura, Banda, Koya, Juang, Pauri, Bhuyan, Banjari and Mankdi. The transitional includes the Bhumis, Oram, Santal, Parenga, Ho. Kisan Mirdha. The assimilate includes the Kuli, Saharas, Binjhals, Saunti and Matia. Each category and each tribe has its own social system. They speak a language of their own which has no script. The bulk of the tribe belong to the proto-australoid group and practised shifting cultivation.
K. Suresh Singh, (ed.), *Tribal Situation of India*, (Simla, 1972), pp. 185-86.

35. L.E.B. Cobden Ramsay, *Bengal Gazetteers, Feudatory States of Orissa*, (Calcutta, 1913), p. 22.
36. B.J.(P.)P., Government of Bengal to Government of India, 1348 P., 17 November 1884.
H.N. Sinha, (ed.), *op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 36-38.
K.M. Patra, *Orissa Under the East India Company*, (New Delhi, 1971), p. 276.
37. After the addition of seven States of the Central Provinces with the Tributary *Mahals* in 1905 these States were known as Feudatory States of Orissa and in 1908 they were granted with revised *sanads*.
L.E.B. Cobden Ramsay, *op. cit.*, pp. 29 and 93.
38. *Ibid.*, p. 1.
39. *Ibid.*
40. L.E.B. Cobden Ramsay (in *Bengal Gazetteers, Feudatory States of Orissa*, p. 2) has mentioned the name of 17 States excluding Angul and Banki; while K.M. Patra (in *Orissa State Legislature and Freedom Struggle*, p. 268) has mentioned about 18 States including Angul and Banki. But the number of the Tributary *Mahals* in early 19th century should be 19 until the confiscation of Banki and Angul in 1840 and 1848 respectively when the number was reduced to 17.
Selections from the Records of the Bengal Government, No. III, (Calcutta, 1851), p. 58.
41. C.U. Aitchison, *op. cit.*, pp. 314-16.
42. L.B. Cobden Ramsay, *op. cit.*, p. 25
L.S. Maddox, *op. cit.*, pp. 409-10.
43. C.U. Aitchison, *loc. cit.*
44. B.J.(C)P., No. 34, 5 September 1805.
45. *Ibid.*, Nos. 18 & 19, 26 February 1807.
46. Prithivi Singh was the brother of Jaisingh and Lokanath Singh was the illegitimate son of Raja Jaraor Singh who was ruling Angul prior to Jai Singh.
47. John Richardson was the Settlement Commissioner and J. Sage was the acting Judge and Magistrate of Cuttack.
48. B.J.(C)P., No. 34, 3 January 1815.
49. B.R.P., No. 43, 18 October 1814.
B.A.R., 1901-1902, p. 58.
50. *Ibid.*
B.J.(C)P., No. 34, 3 January, 1815.

51. *Ibid.*, No. 29, 26 July 1814.
52. *Ibid.*, No. 33, 5 December 1839.
    L.E.B. Cobden Ramsay, *op. cit.* p. 25.
53. B.R.P., No. 29, 18 March 1815.
54. *Ibid.*
55. *Ibid.*
56. B.J.(C)P., No. 33, 5 December 1839.
57. *Ibid.*
58. *Ibid.*
59. *Ibid.*
60. *Ibid.*
    B.A.R., 1901-1902, p. 58.
61. B.J.(C)P., No. 44, 28 April 1818.
62. B.R.P., No. 25, 19 May 1820.
63. *Ibid.*
64. B.J.(C)P., No. 21, 10 August 1821.
    Blunt to Government, 11 July 1821.
65. *Ibid.*, Government to Blunt, 10 August 1821.
66. *Ibid.*
67. B.J.(C)P., No. 28, 17 December 1821.
    Ibid., No. 33, 5 December 1839.
68. *Ibid.*, No. 4, 16 August 1831.
69. *Ibid.*
70. *Ibid.*
71. *Ibid.*, No. 7, 29 November 1831.
72. Peers were otherwise known as praganas, *i..e*, a largest fiscal land division in the State.
73. *O.D.G.*, *Mayurbhanj* (Cuttack, 1967), p. 73.
    R.P. Chanda, *Selections from Official Letters and Records relating to the History of the Mayurbhanj*, Vol. II (Calcutta, 1942), pp. 33-35.
74. B.J.(C)P., No. 97, 10 April 1832.
75. *O.D.G.*, *Mayurbhani, loc. cit.*
76. B.J. (C). P., No. 30, 12 June 1832.
77. *O.D.G.*, *Mayurbhani*, p. 74.
78. *Ibid.*
79. B.J. (C). P., No. 26, 7 February 1837.
80. *Ibid.*, No. 33, 5 December 1839.
81. *Ibid.*, No. 48, 5 December 1839.
82. *Ibid.*
83. *Ibid.*, No. 55, 14 April 1840.
84. Mills minute on the Tributary *Mahals* of Orissa, 23 January 1847, p. 64.
    Selections from the Records of the Bengal Government, No. III, (Calcutta, 1851), p. 64.
85. B.J.(C) P., No. 38, 17 November 1840.
86. *Ibid.*, No. 2, 13 March 1843.

87. Meriah system was related to human sacrifice by the Khonds as a tribal custom. The sacrifice of a human being was considered helpful to increase their agricultural production.
88. B.J.(P).P., No. 1348, 17 November 1884.
89. S.L. Maddox, *Final Report on the Survey and Settlement of the Province of Orissa, 1890-1900*, Vol. I (Calcutta, 1900), p. 410.
These seventeen States were Athmallik, Athgarh, Baramba, Baud, Daspalla, Dhenkanal, Hindol, Keonjhar, Khandapara, Mayurbhanj, Narsinghpur, Nayagarh, Nilgiri, Pal-Lahara, Ranpur, Talcher, Tigiria.
90. Letter of the Government to F. Gouldsbury, dated 29 September 1851.
B.J.(P) P., No. 186.
91. *O.D.G., Mayurbhanj* (Cuttack, 1967), p. 74.
92. *Ibid.*
93. *Ibid.*
94. *See* Appendix, p. 340.
95. *White Paper on Indian States*, Government of India, Ministry of States (Delhi, 1950), p. 12.
Elphinestone wrote "where should we have been now if Scindia, the Nizam, and the Sikh Chief, etc., had been annexed".
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101. *Ibid.*, No. 4510, 9 December 1874.
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104. *Ibid*, p. 71.
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117. B.J.(P).P., No. 35, June 1866.
118. J.K. Samal, *Orissa Under the British Crown*, (New Delhi, 1977), pp. 314-20.
119. B.J.(P).P., June 1862.
120. *Phulbibahi*—a royal concubine.
121. *Pachees Swal*—A set of twenty-five questions mainly on the Garjāt law of inheritance which were popularly propounded by the Superintendent of Tributary *Mahals* in 1814 and replied by all the Chiefs.
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123. *Ibid.*, No. 23, 13 June 1862.
124. R.A.B., 1867-68, pp. 257-59.
K.M. Mishra, *Keonjhar* (Oriya), (Cuttack, 1932), p. 42.
125. Proceedings of the Lieutenant Governor of Bengal, (Political), No. 375, 14 October 1868.
126. *Ibid.*, No. 136, 29 May 1868.
127. *Ibid.*, No. 5988, 29 December 1868.
128. *Ibid.*
129. R.A.B., 1870-71, pp. 77-80.
130. *Utkal Dipika*, 11, July 1891.
131. *Ibid.*
B.J. (P) P. December 1981, Govt. of Bengal to Government of India, No. 124 P.D., 20 June 1891.
132. *Ibid.*
133. B.J.(P).P., *loc. cit.*
134. *Ibid.*
135. R.A.B., 1891-92, pp. 3-7.
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146. *Ibid.*

147. B.J.(P).P., No. 297, 25 May 1894.
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149. *Ibid*
150. *Ibtd.*, No. 1952, 4 October 1894.
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152. B.J.(P).P., No. I T, 22 November 1893.
153. *Ibid.*
154. *Ibid.*, No. 1429, 7 July 1894.
155. *Meli*—Disturbance caused by agitation.
156. B.J.(P).P., No. 1429, 7 July 1894.
157. *Melias*—the rebels.
158. B.J.(C).P., No. A, 3 February 1985.
159. *Ibid.*, No. 1051, 29 March 1895.
160. B.J.(P).P., No. 4C—P, 31 August 1895.
161. R.A.B., 1895-96, p. 16.
162. The ruling was made over the issue of a murder in Mayurbhanj. A murderer of Mayurbhanj State being tried was awarded with death sentence by the Deputy Commissioner of Singhbhum. Subsequently, the case was sent in 1881 for the confirmation of High Court of Calcutta. At this, Maharaja Krusna Chandra Bhanj of Mayurbhanj raised the question that the High Court had no power to try the cases of Mayurbhanj because Mayurbhanj was not a part of British India. Over the question, a full bench decision was made and the High Court gave the ruling that Mayurbhanj was not a part of British India; and was found codified in the 8th section of the law report of Calcutta High Court. (Souvenir on *Utkal Day and Utkal Gaurab Madhusudan Das*, Rourkela, dated 1 April 1969, pp. 10-11). In 1888, it was decided by the Secretary of States-in-Council, in accordance with the ruling of the High Court, that the 17 Tributary *Mahals* of Orissa did not form a part of British India. C.U. Aitchison, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 299.
163. *Ibid.*, Vol. I (Calcutta, 1909), pp. 319-36.
164. R.A.B., 1905-06, pp. 4 and 5.
165. *The Feudatory and Tributary States of the Orissa Division and the Rules Applicable to them*, *op. cit.*, p. 8.
166. *Ibid.*, p. 8.
167. Infra, pp. 28-29.
168. Souvenir, *op. cit.* (Rourkela, 1969), p. 11.
169. N. Singh Deo, *Singhbhum, Saraikella and Kharswan, Through the Ages*, (Calcutta, undated), p. 76.
170. C.U. Aitchison, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, (Calcutta, 1931), p. 321.
171. *Ibid.*
172. Maharaja of Mayurbhanj submitted a separate memorandum because in 1829 Mayurbhanj alone entered into the Engagements with the British Government. That was why Mayurbhanj deserved a separate treatment.

173. *The Samaj*, 4 January 1933, criticised the proposed formation of Eastern States Agency on the ground that it would injure Oriya nationalism if the Garjāts of Orissa would be united with those of Bihar and Madhya Pradesh (Central Provinces) in having a common administrative set-up.
174. *Ibid*, 10 January 1934.
175. *Infra*.
176. N. Singh Deo, *op. cit*., p. 74.
177. *Ibid*.
178. *Ibid*., p. 75.
179. *Ibid*.
180. C.U. Aitchison, *op. cit*., p. 391.
181. N. Singh Deo, *op. cit*. p. 75.
182. *Ibid*., p. 76.
183. N. Singh Deo, *op. cit*., p. 76.
184. *Ibid*., p. 78.

2

Pattern of Administration

STATUS AND POSITION OF THE CHIEFS

Medieval Period

MOST OF THE Orissa States were very ancient and they maintained their separate political entities through the vicissitudes of time. Hilly, wooded and inaccessible, they were far away from the touch of civilization. And to preserve their entities against any foreign invasion throughout the ages they acknowledged the Paramountcy of some bigger power and in every case they were left free to exercise their internal sovereignty.[1]

During the Paramountcy of the *Gajapatis* (1435 to 1541) they were acting as *de facto* proprietors of their possessions exercising uncontrolled territorial jurisdiction within their limits and were appropriating the entire revenue subject to the performance of military and other offices and duties at the Court of the *Gajapatis*.[2]

After the death of the last great *Gajapati* Mukundadeva in 1568, the Paramountcy was combinedly held by the Nawabs of Bengal and the Mughal emperors of Delhi from 1568 to 1751.[3] However, the Muslim rule had not left any legacy in the States probably because of its isolated character and because the States successfully resisted the militant Islam culture. During the Paramountcy of the Mughals, Todar Mall, the revenue minister of Akbar, adopted the traditional policy of keeping the hilly region separate from the coastal, plain and fertile region for efficient revenue administration. Orissa, in consequence, was divided into two revenue zones,[4] *viz*; (*i*) *Mughalbandi*, compris-

ing the plain and fertile lands of Balasore, Cuttack and Puri districts under the direct administration of the Mughal emperor; and (*ii*) '*Garjats*, comprising the hilly region under the Oriya Chiefs who used to pay annual tributes to the Emperor and in return were being recognised as Feudatories exercising internal sovereignty.

The death of Aurangzeb in 1707 was followed by a period of chaos and confusion. Alivardi Khan, who usurped the Musnad of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa in 1740, was subsequently compelled to cede the whole of Orissa except the district of Midnapore to the Bhonsle Raja Raghuji II of Nagpur in 1751. The hill States of Orissa thus came under the Paramountcy of the Marathas. But the relations of the *Garjāts* with the Marathas were not peaceful. They governed them through coercion; tributes being realised by employing troops.

British Period

By the first decade of the 19th century, the Tributary States as a class had become sharply distinguished from the ordinary *zamindaries* paying fixed or variable revenues to the British Government. The Company continued the traditional policy of keeping the *Mughalbandi* separate from the *Garjāts* because under the ring-fence scheme the Company attempted to create a series of buffer States along the frontiers all over India, which would insulate their possessions against direct invasion by any powerful States.[5] The States brought under this system through treaties, were assured of military assistance against external aggression and internal rebellion[6] at their own expense.[7] They were required not to enter into relations with any other foreign power except through the East India Company. The States, thus, were brought under the political control of the Company and the British authority became "Paramount in effect".[8] They were reduced to a subordinate position with internal autonomy and were bound to the Company by certain political and military obligations, which varied according to the terms of treaties, engagements and *Sanads*. The Company remained *de facto* supreme and could effectively impose its will on the States regardless of the terms of the treaties; it was also in a position to intervene in their internal affairs in contravention of the agreement.[9]

Under such circumstances, the Company could have annexed these States. But during this period the Company was primarily interested in advancing its economic interests and political significance without much risk. The veteran English diplomats and administrators advised the Company to preserve the native States in India. According to Sir John Malcolm, the existence of these States was necessary for the British Government in order to maintain "tranquillity, not to say of security of our vast Oriental possessions".[10] Elphinestone and Duke of Wellington maintained that the States provided 'shelter' to these unruly elements which could rebel against the British Empire any time.[11] Shepard favoured the existence of these princedoms and maintained that the Indian Princes could render invaluable service in conciliating their subjects for the Company.[12] The rash move of Lord Dalhousie to expand the British dominion in India by the doctrine of "lapse and escheat" created considerable resentment and he was held responsible for the upheaval of 1857.[13] It put an end to the expansionist policy of the British Government and the administration of the States was left to the discretion of their respective Chiefs.

It is the Mutiny of 1857 that recognised the importance of the Indian States as "breakwaters". Consequently, the British Government in recognition of the "distinguished and valuable services"[14] as well as of the "loyal co-operation"[15] of the Chiefs granted them the confiscated titles[16] and prerogatives, remitted their debts and tributes,[17] bestowed on them honours and adoption "*Sanads*"[18] lavishly. But at the same time the "graceful *Sanads*" carried with them the obligation to follow a sound policy of which "loyalty to the Crown" was the prime criterion.[19]

The Oriya-speaking States may be divided into three groups in accordance with the nature of their relations with the British Government. Group I comprised seventeen States otherwise known as Tributary *Mahlas*,[20] *viz.*, Athmallik, Athgarh, Baramba, Baud, Daspalla, Dhenkanal Hindol, Keonjhar, Khandapara, Mayurbhanj, Narsinghpur, Nayagarh, Nilgiri, Pal-Lahara, Ranpur, Talcher and Tigiria. The Treaty Engagements of these States were almost similar in character with some modification, changes or omissions. *Sanads* were conferred upon

these States in 1862, 1874, 1894,[21] 1908, 1915 and finally in 1937 which classified them as 'A', 'B', 'C'.

Group II comprised Bamara, Bonai, Gangpur, Patna, Rairakhol and Sonepur otherwise known as Sambalpur *Gatjāt* States.[22] During the Governor Generalship of Lord Wellesley, the Bhonsle Raja was forced to sign a suplementary article to be attached to the Treaty of Deogaon by which he formally ceded to the British Government all these Sambalpur States. But after the departure of Lord Wellesley in 1805 Sir George Barlow, the acting Governor-General, restored these territories to Raghuji Bhonsle by a treaty dated 24 August 1806.[23] Again in 1818 by the Ring-fence policy of Lord Hastings, they were reverted to the British protection by a treaty of 1826. They were granted *Sanads* in 1852, (Kalahandi in 1867), 1905, 1915 and 1937.

Group III comprised the Singhbhum States, *viz.*, Saraikella and Kharswan. Of these two, Kharswan had no separate political status and was a dependency of Saraikella uptil 1825.[24] Their independent status during the Mughals and the Marathas had been attested by the *Bengal District Gazeetteers* and Aitchison's "Treaty Engagement. . . . ".[25] Hence, the provisions of the 2nd and 10th articles of the treaty of Deogaon or the treaty of 1826 or the final lapse of the Nagpur Maratha family in 1853, had any connection with these States. It is because of this that the British Government imposed a *Sanad* in 1860 on them without taking into account their political antecedents, reducing them to the status of *Zamindars*. In 1899, these States were granted revised *Sanads* on the declaration of the Secretary of States for India in 1891 that the Chhotanagpur States did not form a part of British India. *Sanads* of 1899 were revised in 1915, 1919 and in 1937 when Saraikella was conferred a *Sanad* of Class 'A' and Kharswan of Class 'B'.

The Queen's assumption of the title of "Empress of India" in 1877, the bestowal of Imperial honours to the Princes and the grant of honourary commission to them in the army reduced the Rulers to a subordinate status.[26] By the *Sanad* of 1862 the Chiefs were designated as "Feudatories."[27] The Feudal character of the Indian Princes was evident from their feudal obligations to the Crown and the way the Governor-General held the *Durbar* of the Princes under his Presidentship as the Crown's Representative.

The *Sanad* of 1937[28] recognised the ruling Chiefs of Orissa and Chhatisgarh States as "autonomous rulers of their own principalities" with defined criminal jurisdiction. However, as discussed, the Paramount Power intervened in the affairs of the States on various pleas like "good Government" and matters of disputed successions where the final verdict was given only by the British Government. The Chiefs were not allowed to cede, sell, exchange or part with their territories to other States without the approval of the Paramount Power.[29] While conferring *Sanads* every time the Chiefs were assured that so long their house remained loyal to the Crown and faithful to the conditions of the Treaties, Engagements and Grants, their position would remain undisturbed.[30]

GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

Thus, excepting unavoidable situations,[31] the British Government adopted an avowed policy of non-interference in the internal administration of the States. The Chiefs enjoyed absolute power within their respective territories. The Government strictly directed the Superintendent not to interfere much between the Rajas and their tenancy, thereby weakening the influence of the Rajas, but to interfere in cases of a political nature and crimes of aggravated type (heinous crimes).[32] However, it was left to the discretion of the Rajas to distinguish between the ordinary cases and "heinous crimes" so that the Superintendent would be invited to deal with the heinous crimes. Normally, the Rajas did not like the interference of the Superintendent in their internal administrations which considerably curtailed their powers.

Political Agent

In 1906, the office of the Political Agent was created under the control of the Commissioner of Orissa to supervise the conduct of the Chiefs. The role of the Political Agent was very strange and ambiguous. His was an advisory and supervisory role as described in the *Sanad*; he was not superior to the Chiefs in status.[33] The Commissioner was regarded as the superior officer to both. This was the Political Agent's position till 1922 when he was called the Political Agent and Commissioner, Orissa

Feudatory States by eliminating Commissioner's connection with the Feudatory States.[34] This post was superior to that of the Chiefs and was ranked with the Commissioner of Orissa.

The duty of the Political Agent and Commissioner (hereinafter referred as Political Officer) was to see that the Chief's administration was calculated to inspire the subjects with a sense of appreciation of the benefits of British administration, which (sense of appreciation) was intended to be the bulwark of the British Raj. But the Political Officer was out and out a foreigner and was highly ignorant of the feelings and practices of the 'Uncivilized' *Garjāt* population. Further, he was directed by the Political Department to convince the Chiefs that he would make the least interference in their internal administration.[35] He was not supposed to control the actions of the Chiefs as to awake and stimulate in them the sense of individual responsibility to encourage them, to effective and just administration on lines which they have adopted as their own, to lead them to a healthy emulation with each other in good Government; and to make them realise that this is the desire of the Government to refrain from all interference, and that just and firm rules by them makes any such interference unnecessary.[36]

Thus, the Chiefs ruled their territories very much according to their own ideas in which the personal influence of the Ruler was an important factor. Usually, the Chiefs invested their *Dewans* with executive powers[37] and confined themselves to dealing with the appellate cases. The Chiefs had absolute powers as far as the administration of civil justice is concerned so long as they were impartial and fair.[38] Even though the "Treaty Engagements" and the '*Sanads*' of the British Government put a number of restrictions and limitations on the administration of civil and criminal justice, the Chiefs were exercising unlimited and absolute powers either within the knowledge of the Political Department or without.[39] Even the records of 1839 reveal that they were inflicting capital punishments.[40] So far as the civil justice is concerned, the Chiefs were supposed to discharge it "fairly and impartially" but in practice excepting a few States like Bamara, Kalahandi, Mayurbhanj and Patna, the Chiefs of the rest of the States rarely followed any established law or custom.[41] No doubt the British Government had made provisions

for complaints against the arbitrary actions of the Chiefs but the way of the enquiry was very fantastic and useless. It provided:[42]

> Should any complaint be received by the Political Agent against a Chief, he may receive it, and after such examination, if any of the petitioner as may be expedient, he may (*i*) refer to interfere and file the petition, (*ii*) forward the petition to the Chief for disposal, (*iii*) forward the petition to the Chief for favour of report, or take actions as follows.

On the receipt of such complaints of serious nature as to make it appear to the Political Agent that a formal enquiry should be held into the matter, whether within the territory of a State or elsewhere, the Political Agent should report the matter to the Commissioner for orders. Before expressing the opinion that it was necessary to hold a formal enquiry of this kind, the Political Agent would ordinarily allow the Chief concerned to have an opportunity of reporting on the complaint. On receipt of a report from the Political Agent proposing that such an enquiry be held, the Commissioner would pass such orders which he deemed fit. If he favoured an enquiry, he would report the matter to the Lieutenant Governor for his orders.[43]

The procedure could be abrogated in cases of urgency when the Commissioner might on his own authority order for a formal enquiry and subsequently report the matter to the Government.

The Political Agent was also empowered to hold enquiries of an informal character to know the truth. He was, however, directed not to entertain petitions from persons who ought, in the first instance, to have applied to the Chiefs concerned.

Such was the way of receiving and conducting enquiry on the petitions against the Chiefs by their subjects. All the petitions against the Chiefs, in the first instance, were returned by the Political Agent to the concerned Chief for enquiry asking thereby the culprit to officiate as the enquiry officer.[44] As a result, the petitioners were inhumanly and mercilessly treated by the Chiefs in the way of fines, arrest, beating and confiscation of their properties.[45] The people were terrorised to such an extent that they never dared once again during their life-time to make any complaints against the Chiefs. The Political Agent who was

directed to supervise the conduct of State affairs by the Chiefs hardly acquainted himself with the affairs of the people. Even though he was having his tour programmes to different States to supervise the administration of the Chiefs for studying the response of their subjects, the Political Agent could not discharge his responsibility well as he was always accompained by the Chief. Even the guest house where the Political Agent stayed, was constantly guarded so that no one could meet him to set forth his grievances.[46] Further, to get certificates of commendation the Chiefs used to arrange a variety of programmes like hunting expeditions, musical entertainment and lavish dinner parties.[47] The Oriya Press not infrequently demanded the attention of the Political Agent against the atrocities of the Rajas.[48] In response, the Political Agent strongly reported to the Government:[49]

> Numerous false and inflamatory statements have been published in the newspapers, '*Prajatantra*', '*Asha*' and '*Samaj*' alleging for instance that anyone in *Khaddar* is being arrested and that the Superintendent has passed orders for the *Gaontias* (village headman) to be whipped and their women folk outraged in their presence if they fail to payment.[50]

The people in most of the States were terrorised by the Chiefs to such an extent that while petitioning a complaint to the Political Department either against the Chief or against the Political Agent or against both, they rarely exposed their names and sent anonymous letters in the hope of justifying the complaints with the least security risk. They were prepared to sign the letters, and, in fact, expressed their desire to do so, provided their identities were not revealed by the authorities.[51] Such a complaint was made by the people of Kharswan State to the Chief Secretary, Political Department, Government of India, about the mal-administration of the young Chief and his officials and servants.[52] Thereupon the Chief Secretary forwarded the letter to the Resident for Eastern States for favour of disposal on December 6, 1946, Order No. 7348-P/46, who in return forwarded to the Political Agent by Order No. P4-3/46 dated December 10, 1946. The Political Agent kept it in the cold

storage because the complaint was both against the Ruler and himself.[53] It is strange that the person against whom complaints were lodged was asked by the Government to officiate as the enquiry and deciding officer.[54]

It was commonly understood that the Political Department was kept in the dark regarding the ugly goings-on in the States. The official records and correspondences revealed that[55] the Government repeatedly advised the Political Agent (*i*) not to interfere in the internal affairs of the Rajas; (*ii*) to convince the Raja that he (Raja) had a free hand in his State; (*iii*) not to allow the subjects of the Ruler to think that appeals against oppression to the Political Agent would be successful. In other words, he was asked to handover a blank cheque to the Rulers in return for loyalty to the Paramount Power.

The grant of "free hand" made the Rajas whimsical in their administration. Laws were not codified and the general public had to suffer under a virtual dictator. All the offices and departments in the State were regulated in accordance with the whims of the Raja. There was no security of service; officers were appointed, promoted, degraded or dismissed at will. There was no fixed cadre. Nepotism was rampant.[56] Services were being ill paid and were mostly held by unqualified people; efficiency in administration suffered to a considerable extent and bribery as well as other forms of corruptions were widely prevalent in most of the States.[57] An interesting feature in the administration of the States was the system of transfer brought to light by an Oriya daily.[58] It detailed how in the States a compounder having twenty-two years experience was transferred as Assistant Treasury Officer, a jailor was transferred as a school teacher, a carpentry supervisor was tranferred as a Forest Range Officer, an Auditor as an Excise Inspector and a Police Inspector as an Auditor.[59]

Civil liberties were non-existent in the States. People were not allowed to hold public meetings. Organisation of any sort by the people was banned. There was no free press, circulation of newspapers was banned and persons subscribing to them were severely dealt with.[60] Detention without trial, deportation to and confiscation of properties were fairly frequent Honour of women was not protected. Youth combined with beauty was in grave danger. Men and vehicles were

employed to hunt down young women, married or awaiting consummation of marriage.[61] Tenants were not allowed to drive on roads constructed by them on *bethi*[62]. They were reserved for the Ruler's motor cars and carts[63]. Necessities of life, like oil, salt, *pan*, coconut, etc., were monopolised by the States.[64]

In most of the States it was not possible for the public to secure authentic and adequate information regrding the administration, moral and material progress as well as social, economic and political conditions prevailing therein. Though the Annual Administration Reports were published in all the States, the public were not aware of their publication.[65]

Excepting one or two, no State had an Annual budget. There was no clear distinction between the public treasury and the Raja's Privy Purse.[66] The Rulers spent directly or indirectly major portions of the State revenue on themselves, their families and their dependants.[67] Accounts were generally not kept according to the approved system and there was no independent audit of the same. Forced labour and contributions were widely prevalent.[68] Regulations sanctioned by the Rulers and Political Agents were set at naught and people continued to groan under the weight of these feudal obligations. The State authorities often interferred in the social and religious life of the people through caste *Panchayats* and ecclesiastical courts.[69]

Generally speaking, the Orissa States were very backward, they were ill governed and their people were much harassed. In the event of any popular agitation against these gross maladministration the Rajas promptly requisitioned the British troops and suppressed them ruthlessly.

JUDICIAL ADMINISTRATION

The judicial powers of the Chiefs were restricted by the *Sanads* issued by the British Government from time to time. They had the authority to try all criminal cases in their territories except (*i*) those in which Europeans were concerned, and (*ii*) those which were heinous in nature such as murder, homicide, robbery and torture.[70] These cases were required to be submitted for the perusal of the Political Department. However,

with the grant of revised *Sanads*, from time to time, the criminal and civil jurisdiction of the Chiefs was enhanced. The powers of the Chiefs of the first group of States (Tributary *Mahals*) was limited as, for instance, they could impose fines up to Rs. 1000, pass a sentence for two years of imprisonment and order thirty strips only.[71] All orders passed by the Chiefs were subjected to revision by the Political Department. The only State in which these powers of the Chiefs had been extended was Mayurbhanj, which was the most advanced and benevolent of all the States of first Group. The Chief of Mayurbhanj was entrusted with the powers of passing sentences of imprisonment for a period not exceeding five years.[72] The Chief was also empowered to try cases of robbery and torture.[73]

The powers of the Chiefs of the five States of Sambalpur group, *i.e.*, Bamara, Kalahandi, Patna, Rairakhol and Sonepur were wider than the powers exercised by the Chiefs of first Group. Under the *Sanads* they had full powers of administration in criminal, civil and revenue matters, except that in the cases of capital punishment, the Chiefs were to submit the case, before passing any orders on it, to the Commissioner of the Orissa Division for confirmation.[74] The Chiefs of Bonai and Gangpur enjoyed limited judicial powers as they could pass a prison term for two years only and impose fines up to a sum of Rs. 50 without having the power of whipping.[75]

However, the aforesaid limitations on judicial powers of the Chiefs were exercised till the beginning of the present century. By the *Sanad* of 1937 the powers of the Chiefs were enhanced considerably with the statements:

> the time has come when the existing restrictions on the judicial and administrative powers of the States may be modified.

The Chiefs were empowered to exercise full civil and criminal jurisdiction except that persons sentenced to death would be given every facility for submitting petitions for mercy to the Political Agent and to the Governor-General, Eastenr States.[76] Only the States of 'C' class were required to submit for confirmation of criminal cases involving sentences of death, deportation or imprisonment beyond seven years.[77]

In all the *Sanads* the British Government categorically emphasised and directed the Chiefs to administer justice "fairly and impartially" to all concerned respecting the legitimate rights of the people.[78] But in practice all those guidelines were brushed aside and the basis of governance was the whims of the Rajas.[79] The judges were dependent on the whims of the Rajas for the tenure of their service; they could be transferred to any department, degraded and dismissed according to the caprice of the Ruler concerned.[80] Very few of the judges and magistrates were really qualified for the work entrusted to them. There was no Rule of Law. Laws were not generally public. In a few States pleaders were allowed with the permission of the local authorities, wherever the interest and authority of the Ruler were not challenged. The Raja used to boast "My word is law and mouth is dictionary.[81]

LAND REVENUE ADMINISTRATION

Clause VIII of the *Sanads* explicitly directed the Chiefs to consult the Commissioner, Orissa Division or the Political Officers duly vested with power by the Lieutenant Governor of Bihar and Orissa-in-Council, in all important matters of administration, like

> the Settlement and Collection of Land Revenue, the imposition of taxes, the administration of justice, arrangements connected with excise, salt and opium and for catching elephants, and other rights, disputes arising out of any such concession, and the disputes in which other States are concerned.[82]

No Chief was allowed to make a general revision of the Land Settlement of his State without consulting the aforesaid authorities.

Land Revenue Administration was practically homogenous throughout the States of Orissa.[83] There was a common agrarian pattern in the States on the whole. Ownership of the land rested with the State but the right of occupancy remained with the actual cultivators,[84] so long as they paid their rents. But the report of the Enquiry Committee reveals that in practice the

peasantary did not have full land right and was liable to ejection in spite of its long possession and enjoyment by successive generations.[85] Alienation by sale, gift or mortgage by a tenant of his holding was illegal, and both the transferer and transferee were subjected to unconditional ejection. The aborigines like Khonds, Binjhals, Jwangs and Bhuyans claimed to be the real owner of the soil because they were the original clearers of the land and called themselves *Zamindars* or owner of the soil.[86] These class of Khonds were mostly found in Kalahandi, where a nominal concessional fee was collected from them. However, in later years they were induced to pay a regular but low rate of land revenue.

In those States which came under the administration of the Court of Wards,[87] regular settlements were introduced. In the erstwhile Tributary *Mahals*, settlements were made by means of local standard pole known as *Dusti Padika* and a rough classification of the soil or an approximate estimate of the produce of the land by a body of umpires and the system was known as *nazar paimas*.[88] In other Feudatory States the measurement of the land was on the basis of seed capacity which was also in vogue in the seventeen Tributary *Mahals*.[89] The period of settlement was generally for ten to fifteen years.

The Zamindars held the lands immediately after the Chief and paid *nazrana* (fees) in succession and cesses on the occasion of marriage and funeral ceremonies of the Chief. The States having *Zamindari* were Bamara, Gangpur, Kalahandi, Keonjhar, Patna and Sonepur. In Kalahandi the Zamindars were the members of the Royal family. In Patna and Sonepur they belonged to the aboriginal races such as Gonds and Binjhals. Below them in the heirarchy were either the maintenance-holder or the *Gaontias*, *Ganjhus*, *Sarbarakars Thikadars* or *Pradhans* where the village leasee was known by one or other of the names.[90] The maintenance-holders otherwise known as *Khorposh* were usually resumable on failure of male heirs of the original grantee. It was denied that the tenure carried any power of alienation. The second class tenure-holders were the original leasee for specific period subjected to renewal if their conduct was felt to be satisfactory by the Chief. During the currency of a lease the right of the eldest son to succecd the headmen was, however, commonly recognised. But renewal of lease did not,

in any case, mean that it was done free. A *salami* (gift) used to be levied, depending on the value of the *Bhogra* land and other relevant considerations.[91] In addition to the official *salami*, a private *salami* also used to be levied by many Rulers which had also been admitted by the Political Agent in the following tone:[92]

> In Rairakhol, indeed, I believe, though I cannot prove it, that already there is a double *salami*, one of the Ruler privately.

This collection in the return had a ruinous effect upon the peasantry from whom the headmen extracted the levied amount later on. And to prevent such practices the Political Department ordered the Rulers to grant "protected" status to the headmen of the following kind:[93] (*i*) those headmen who had possessed *Gountis* (office of headmen) for more than 20 years; (*ii*) those headmen who were the rightful claimers of the village and (*iii*) these who undertook welfare activities such as the digging of ponds and the settlement of the peasants. It was a protection from arbitrary eviction, so long they paid the assessment fixed by the State and fulfilled the conditions of his tenure and their *salami*, in cases of renewal, was less than what it was for an unprotected headmen.[94]

In the Land Revenue Administration the village headman occupied a prominent position. He was the immediate and only intermediatory between the Raja and the tenants. The headman was invariably considered as a public servant and the rules on the subject were clear that he was liable to be ejected for misbehaviour, breach of the terms of the lease and other reasons. He was not in, any sense, a tenure holder or proprietor though he had in many cases paid a heavy *salami* or premium to be the headman.[95] In many cases, lucrative villages were kept by the Rulers for their personal benefit or were given to relatives [96]

All the lands in a village were leased out to the village headman. He collected the rents and abwabs payable by the ryots holding lands within the area leased to him, and, for this work he received either a commission or was entitled to hold the *Bhogra* land. In case of commission they received 5 to 15 per cent of the total collection and in case of *Bhogra* land which was attached with the office varied from 20 to 25 per cent of the

total lands of the village.[97] The *Bhogra* lands in all the States excepting Gangpur were assessed and the headmen paid for them, but the only satisfaction was that they were the best lands in the village. Moreover, he was entitled to get aid (*bethi*) from the villagers to cultivate the *Bhogra* land. If any headman was unable to collect rents he was provided assistance from the State, but in such cases, he was required to deposit the total revenue of his area and then only the State took action.[98] In view of this responsibility, there were many villages in the States without headmen, as the circumstances of the villages were not such as to render feasible the acceptance of the responsibility.[99]

The headman had no right to transfer by sale or gift or mortgage his *Bhogra* lands, and if he was found doing so he *ipso facto* lost his village. However, he was allowed to privately partition his *Bhogra* lands amongst his family members. The tenants were liable to ejection if they failed to pay the rents and meet the feudal obligations. Tenants were not permitted to add to their holdings without the express or implied consent of the headman.[100] In collecting the land revenue and meeting other feudal obligations the headman was assisted by the *Chowkidar* (village police) and a *paik* (militia).[101]

The *chowkidars*, under different denominations such as *Kalo*, *Kotwal*, *Mahanayakas*, *Gandas*, *Jhankars* constituted the rural police and for their services enjoyed jagir lands from less than an acre to 20 acres.[102] But in Mayurbhanj they were paid Rs. 5 by local assessment and in Gangpur they were paid Re. 1 per month. It is also worth-mentioning here that in States like Bonai and Patna the *chowkidars* had neither jagir land nor did they receive any cash payment. They cling to their duties because of the position of being a *Chowkidar* and of the bare allurement of a dress uniform symbolising some authority and also of a few paddy sheaves obtained at the harvest from the villagers they served.[103]

Besides the above three categories of land-holders, there were land-holders in all States, who were exempted from the payment of land revenue and other abwabs. In respect of rent-free grant, the States distinguished themselves by its copiousness and variety. Some of them were of great antiquity. Types of grants common to all States were maintenance grants given to relatives

or favourites, grants made as charity, as rewards for good service or as remuneration for rendering services or to show favour and grants for the purposes of deities or religious institutions (*debottar*). These grants consisted of entire villages, or a single village, or merely portions of lands. In Dhenkanal, extensive areas were granted as maintenance jagir to the Ruler's relatives. Grants made to members of the Raj family, for maintenance, were known as *Khanja* or *Babuana*.[104] Such grants were no less than *zamindaries*.[105] In Dhenkanal, such grantees had the right to minerals and forests. The grantees enjoyed the right of appointing their own village headmen with or without the approval of the Ruler.

The grants made to the deities (*debottar*) were extremely extensive.[106] Quite a number of grants were in favour of deities outside the States like the Jagannath of Puri and Bisweswar of Benares.[107] But most of the grants were for deities inside the States. Similarly, were the *Brahmottar* grants or grants to Brahmins. The origin of the grant was the immigration of Brahmins as religious preceptors and learned men whom the Rulers liked to have in their States.[108] Such immigration was encouraged and land grants were given to make it worthwhile for a Brahmin from a distant place to come and settle in the States. Such grants were known as *Sasons*.[109] The grants were in perpetuity but everywhere it was a condition of the grant that it should not pass on to a person who was not qualified to perform the religious and preceptorial functions. Next were the service grants or service *jagirs* which were found in all the States. These grants were burdened with service and rarely consisted of entire villages. They were *paiks* who rendered military help to the Rajas and did the work of guards or peons. The other types of service *jagirs* were for rendering service to the Rulers and to the villagers, such as beating drum on ceremonial occasions, washing clothes, barbers, astrologers, *jhankar* who was the priest of the village sylvan Gods, the watchmen, the identifiers of the boundary, the blacksmith, the carpenter and the like. Their grants were only of small extents of land and their demand was collectively borne by the villagers for the services rendered by them.[110] However, the Government of India had directed the Chiefs to exempt retired non-commissioned officers and soldiers of the native

army and of the Kashmir State Army from taxes and rendering *beggari* or *bethi* labour.[111]

The enormous alienation of State revenue in the shape of grant was striking. The effect of the grants that increased in number and extent from time to time by fresh grants made by each Ruler was particularly adverse on the State revenues. In order to compensate the financial loss caused by these grants, most of the Rulers were compelling the people to pay an enhanced rate of land revenue and a number of illegal dues. That apart, the tenants under the grantees had no security of tenure and this naturally had a demoralising effect on the tenantry. Finally, the rulings of the Political Agents to the effect that no Ruler was bound by the grants made by his predecessors and Rulers generally utilised this rule to punish such grantees as used to be considered undesirable. This naturally had a very demoralising effect on the grantees themselves.

The rents were mostly paid in cash and additional contributions at fixed rates, usually of rice, grain, ghee and goats, were levied on the occasion of certain festivals. In some States these additional contributes were commuted to cash payment. Supplies (*rasad*) were given free to the Chief and State officials and this was also regarded as a part of the revenue. The system of providing free labour, was also considered a revenue asset on the ground that the revenue assessment was very lenient.

All the States had one common feature, namely, absence of a properly codified tenancy law.[112] R.K. Ramdhyani, Special Officer to examine Land Tenures and the Revenue System of the Orissa and Chhatisgarh States reported in 1941:

> In Orissa States, generally speaking, there is no field staff for the maintenance of records. . . . In the Agency as a whole, it may be said that the maintenance of land records leaves much to be desired. . . .[113]

Previous practices, orders passed in individual cases expedient adopted to handle particular situations or at best fragmentary rules were all that used to control the tenancy rights on these States.[114] There was partically nothing as would help the actual cultivator against the State or whims of the Ruler or any of his official. The only security the cultivator enjoyed in respect of

his land was, therefore, the fact that he was a desirable person contributing to the revenue of the State. This innate strength of the cultivator must have been a powerful factor in the days when States consisted almost entirely of forest and hill for, without a population, the State could have little revenue, and forests and minerals had little inherent value in those days. However, as the population increased, and more and more land became cultivated and forests receded, in the absence of an industrial economy, there was a change in the gradual weakening of the position of the cultivator.

The cultivator became more concerned for the fear of losing his land, the only source of livelihood. This explains the vigorous peasants' agitation in the thirties and fourties of the century for right over the land they cultivated. Sir Francis Wylie, Political Adviser to the Crown Representative, rightly emphasised the Special Officer R.K. Ramdhyani in 1941 that

> there can be neither contentment nor prosperity in an agricultural community unless rights in the soil are both granted and effectively guaranteed. The expression "rights in the soil" includes ofcourse the fixation of land revenue demand.[115]

In all States the principles that land revenue should not be subjected to fluctuations during the currency of a Settlement was generally recognised. But in practice the Rulers collected cesses at anytime in spite of the fact that the cess as well as the land revenue had to be paid from the same source of income.[116] R.K. Ramdhyani realising the adverse effect of such practice recommended that,

> if it is desired to make the ground infertile for agitation, it is essential to see that the numerous irksome restrictions and levies which bring in little revenue and cause a great deal of irritation are removed.[117]

Another important feature of the administration of the States was that Laws and Rules remained in existence only on paper. Ramdhyani reported that the individual reports would show instances where one thing was written and a quite different

thing was done in practice.[118] Thus, the system of the personal rule characterised the land revenue adminisration in the States. The control of the Political Department on the administration was very feeble, whatever might have been the réason therefor. No definite system of settlement was followed and the work done in each settlement generally followed the method in which the Settlement Officer had his training in the province from which he was deputed for the work. R.K. Ramdhyani obsersved[119]

> Settlements are in fact regarded as merely a means to augment the revenue, and the method adopted is of little importance so long as this purpose was served. . . . On the whole, the States are unfortunate in getting for their Settlement Officers who would not be fit to be in independent charge of Settlements in the Provinces, retired Officers or offices on the verge of retirement sometimes too heavy to move about much. . . . In the matter of classification of villages and lands on the whole, much arbitrariness had prevailed and each Settlement Officer has more or less given scope to his own previous training and background without a proper study of the conditions of the State.

The village headman was the real authority in connection with the land revenue administration, but he was rarely guaranted a protected status. However, in Mayurbhanj land occupancy right was recognised by the Mayurbhanj Tenancy Regulation, based on the Bengal Tenancy Act, 1885. R.K. Ramdhyani in 1941 had rightly suggested that all these had a demoralising effect on the peasantry in the States, that the atmosphere in the States had been surcharged with tension, that the introduction of agrarian reforms was urgent and no time should be lost to introduce the reforms so as to bring the States on par with the neighbouring Province.

MAL-ADMINISTRATION

The system of administration practised in the Feudatory States of Orissa during the 20th century, as discussed, was far from

beneficial. Medieval institutions and feudal practices were the orders of the day.[120] The system of taxation prevailing in the States defied all canons of a sound financial system. In British Districts the peasants were protesting against the high rates of land revenue, but the same rent in the States was higher still.[121] In the neighbouring British administered areas the average rent was Rs. 1-3-5 per acre of land. The practice of exacting high land revenue had also been attested by a letter from Hastings House, Alipur,[122] Calcutta to L.C.L. Griffin, the Political Agent, Orissa States. The letter was accompanied by a list of revenue manuals for the guidance of the Political Agent. The Political Agent was also advised to familiarise himself with the particular system of revenue administration in force in the adjoining provinces and consequently to advise the Rulers under his jurisdiction to "assimilate their revenue administration, so far as may be practicable to the system prevailing in British India.[123] Added to this there were numerous other taxes varied between 1/2 anna to 2 annas 3 pies per rupee of rent; hospital cess varied between 1/2 anna to 1 anna 6 pies per rupee of rent; forest cess varied between 1/2 anna to 1 anna 3 pies per rupee of rent; Road cess varied between 1 anna 6 pies to 6 annas per rupee of rent.[124] However, the cess was levied in lieu of *Bethi* and *Beggari*. Grazing fee was fixed at 1 anna to Re. 1-4-0 per cattle per year. Besides this, cess on sugar-cane and also cess on using sugar-cane crushing machine were imposed. Sugar-cane cultivation was discouraged by the Chiefs. Baramba State was discouraging sugar-cane cultivation by imposing a tax of Rs. 20 per acre beyond the fourtieth acre of land where sugar-cane was grown maintaining that because of the conversion of the paddy lands into sugar-cane lands, the State was running a deficit in the production of rice.[125] Tax on landless labourers, on fruits, cess for exporting grain or merchandise, fee for adoption, *salamis* for allowing widows to adopt (in most of the States at the rate of Rs. 5 per acre of land)[126]; again, in many States both income-tax and levy, tax on salt, kerosene, *biri*, tobacco, *pan*, coconut, coir, meat and many other articles and necessaries of life besides State monopoly on these articles, in some States special fees for permitting the use of double plank doors, use of any hat dress, use of *Palinkins* (Symbol of aristocracy) were extracted from the subjects.[127]

In a poverty stricken area, where the only source of income was cultivation, this inhuman system of taxation did the inevitable: it broke the back-bone of the peasantry. Moreover, the rents and taxes were all collected in cash. In addition to this, unfortunately for the farmers, the rates of the various agricultural products were very low and it was difficult for the peasantry to collect even a rupee by selling their produce. Between 1925 and 1937 the amounts of the agricultural produce per rupee were as follows:[128] rice varied from 35 to 40 *seers*,[129] *dal* from 20 to 22 *seers*, oil from 5 to 6 *seers*, *gur* from 30 to 32 *seers* and ghee one and half *seers*. The agricultural products were so cheap and plentiful that people were not purchasing them and the peasants were unable to collect money to pay their rents and taxes. The mode of collection of taxes was very severe; the defaulters were heavily punished in very inhuman ways; they were made naked before the public and flogged mercilessly by the untouchables[130] and low caste people; they were thrown into lock-ups without food and water till they paid their rents[131], and even their properties were attached.[132]

Being thoroughly terrorised by the State officials, the peasants were either mortgaging or selling their precious assets like ornaments, oxen and other household articles to pay the State dues.[133] In addition to these payments in cash, the peasants were required to pay a number of feudal levies like *Bethi*, *Beggari*, *Rasad*, *Magan*, *Kara Samagiri*, *Bheti*, *Shikar Bethi*, *Ratha Bethi*, *Dasera Bethi*, *Hatikheda Bethi*, and many others.[134] Previously these services were rendered to the State in exchange for daily feeding and were considered a part of revenue assets to compensate the light assessment of the land revenue.[135] But in practice the land revenue charges were sufficiently high and the peasants on *bethi* and *beggari* were not at all provided with food.[136] The '*Deshakatha*' reported[137] that though in the League of Nations forced and unpaid labour like *bethi* and *beggari* were condemned and public opinion demanded its abolition, these were widely practised in the *Garjāts* of Orissa. The people were groaning under the weight of these feudal demands and exactions. The Rajas[138] took the plea that these were technically not forced labour, rather personal services rendered by the tenants in consideration of the low rate of rents on their lands, which they rendered with reluctance. Further, they held that the total aboli-

tion of *bethi* would entail expenditure which the States were unable to incur without additional taxation which would cause greater hardship. But the Rajas never thought of cutting short their personal expenditures for the good of the subjects and the State. The nation building Departments were systematically starved of funds. By exacting *bethi* they were constructing huge and magnificent buildings and other structures. The palace of Talcher was surrounded by a three mile long wall, the height and thickness of which were 8′-10″ and 35″ respectively. The construction work covered a period of 5 to 7 years through *bethi*.[139] Observing the atrocities of the Rulers and the plight of the people working on *bethi*, R.K. Ramdhyani, the Special Officer investigating on Land Tenure and Revenue system of the Orissa and Chhatisgarh States, reported in 1942 that[140]

> the individual reports show that this system still prevails to a greater or less extent in most States. . . . I do not believe there is need to compel ryots to labour without payment or inadequate payment in any of the States. As already pointed out, the cultivator is a heavily taxed person to whose burdens and misery it would be iniquitous to add. Labour is "dirt-cheap" in this country and to insist upon free or unpaid labour is the height of collousness and perversity . . . *bethi* should be abolished without any reservation . . .

While going by train from Cuttack to Talcher one would be certainly attracted by the stupendous structure of "*Yatan Nagar*" situated on the hills of Similia village. The Palace is a double storeyed building with 99 rooms. It was constructed by the Raja of Dhenkanal, through *bethi*, for his brother (*Pattayat*) who was also the *Dewan* of the State and was named after Yatan Kumari the wife of the *Pattayat*. The magnificent palace on the hill was adorned with a huge tank, fountains, gardens and all the modern amenities. Its foundation was laid on 10 March 1932 and the work was completed in 1936. During the construction of this palace the people of Dhenkanal were subjected to inhuman torture and oppression about which a detailed description has been given by Brajakishore Dhal.[141] Another autocratic structure of Dhenkanal was the "*Menda Fada Ghai*" (a minor irrigation

Project) near the village Parjang. A similar autocratic structure in the State of Talcher was the '*Arjun Kata*', a vast tank covering several square miles and looking like a sea. In the State of Bamara one would be attracted by the scenic beauty of two romantic bungalows, namely, "*Basanta Nivas*" and "*Lalita Basanta*" on the hills of Pradhanpat approximately at a distance of one kilometre from the palace of Bamara in the township of Deogarh. These were the products of *bethi* rendered by the people of Bamara for more than 6 years.[142] Both the buildings were adorned with imported glasses, fountains and beautiful gardens. One would be surprised to see the stupendous and magnificent palaces of the Rajas of Orissa in comparison to their resources corresponding to the revenue of an average *Tahsil* and in few cases the Sub-division of a district.[143]

Besides the aforesaid atrocities, the people of the States were subjected to a lot of interference and limitations as far as their civil liberties were concerned. Interference by the State authorities, in the social and religious life of the people, was made through caste *Panchayats* and ecclesiastical courts which impeded their progress.[144] The rights of the people about grazing, fuel and use of forest timbers were progressively and seriously encroached upon. Reserved areas in forests were increased, more species of wood were added to reserved forest and high fees were levied for the use of forest articles for daily, domestic and agricultural purposes. Apart from all these, the plight of the people can be well imagined from the following description published in the *Prajatantra*.[145]

> Here comes the peons and the police of the Raja, whatever the position and caste of a man may be they will enter his house, beat him, drag him out and take him by the pigtail to work on *bethi*.
>
> Now the Raja wants a *Shikar*—whether for the Raja himself or some friends of his—the tenants are beaten and taken to the *Shikar*. No matter if in the *Shikar* the tenant is shot and killed, if he is trampled to death by elephants or suffers the pang of utter starvation.
>
> Then an information is received of the whereabouts of a beautiful woman. She is forcibly abducted for satisfying the abominable passion of some one, and for

> this end the commission of every possible sin is permissible.
>
> The State treasury is exhausted on prostitutes, wine and motor cars. Let there be mourning in the State, let the tenants have deep signs of distress but they will have to pay subscription for the Raja's *nautch* party (of prostitutes).
>
> If the news reach Europe and other countries they will call the reporter a lier saying that such is not possible in the 20th century but at the news that such things are happening daily in our Orissa *Garjāts*, the very God of shame will shut his ears, the body will shiver and the heart will beat wildly. Inhuman oppression is prevalent in almost every *Garjāt* State.
>
> Many think that the British Government will remedy these evils—the British Government can do it if it likes as the Feudatory Chiefs of Orissa have not much power. It is only through their luck that now they are being called Rajas, in reality, however, they are so many *Zamindars*. When the British were in a hurry to extend their possessions they made a compromise with the Rajas instead of taking the trouble of going into the hills and jungles but now nobody will speak a word if they shut their eyes and pen through the compromise. The British Government have ample powers, they can stop the *Garjāt* oppressions, if they want to, but nothing is being done by them.[146]

Generally speaking, the States of Orissa were very backward and ill governed, and the people were harassed in a number of ways. This condition of administration in the States was referred to by Lord Zetland, Secretary of States for India at a meeting of the Liverpool Chamber of Commerce :[147]

> At present there has been some trouble between the princes and their subjects. There were great States in India like Hyderabad, Mysore and Baroda where the level of administration was extremely high, but there were other States, (particularly in Orissa) where the standard of administration was susceptible to considerable

> improvements and in this view the time had come when the Paramount Power should intervene a little more actively than it had done in the past, not with a view derogating from the sovereignty of the Princes but for giving them advice with the object of raising the standard of their administration. Though we are under the promise to protect the Princes against aggression from without it is only reasonable that we should see that the legitimate grievances of their Highness subjects should be carefully considered by them and where possible, remedy should be applied.

This diplomatic tone of Lord Zetland, however, leaves many things unsaid or vague. In the first instance, the legitimate grievances of the subjects should be considered not by an impartial tribunal or by the Paramount Power but by the Rajas themselves, which means that the accused would be asked to consider the charges levelled against himself. Then the remedy should be applied only, "where possible". Zetland also emphasised that the Government need not pressurise the Princes to bring about radical changes in the form of their administration which was a matter of the Princes themselves.

The Paramount Power was not unaware of the need to improve the administration in the States. A number of Viceroys advised the Princes to grant good Government to the people.[148] But in practice all those advices fell on the deaf ears of the Rajas. By leaving the people at the mercy of the Rajas, the British Government availed the loyal support of the latter, but failed to absolve themselves from the moral responsibility of protecting the helpless people. Prolonged misrule and the consequent sufferings resulted in accumulated grievances which awaited for an opportunity to explode. Such an opportunity would be knocking at the door very soon.

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(Hereinafter referred to as P.S.O.C.S.)

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3. P.S.O.C.S., *loc. cit.*
4. A. Stirling, *op. cit.*, p. 32.
5. The Ring-fence policy was adopted by the Company from the beginning to bulwark against powers like the Dutch, the Portuguese, and the Marathas.
6. The Feudatory and Tributary States of the Orissa Division and the Rules Applicable to them, *op. cit.*, p. 264.
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12. *Ibid.*
13. Surendra Nath Sen, *Eighteen Fifty-seven*, (Delhi, 1957), pp. 38-39.
14. Foreign and Political Department, No. 43A, 30 April 1860.
15. *Ibid.*, Proceedings, No. 115-8, Part A, January 1861.
16. *Ibid.*, No. 607-52, Part A, April 1860.
17. *Ibid.*, No. 261, Part A, June 1860.
18. Lee Warner, who has been recognised as the authorised expounder of treaties and *Sanads* by the writers on International Law in his book *The Protected Princes of India*, (London, 1894), p. 378, maintained that in Treaty and Engagement there is reciprocity in the contractual relation, whereas there is no reciprocity in a *Sanad.* It is a grant and the conditions attached to the *Sanad* bind the recipient of the grant without burdening the granter with any obligation. Normally, it was a deed of grant by a sovereign power. Viewed in this light a party to a Treaty Engagement occupies a higher status than the recipient of a *Sanad.* Saraikella and Kharswan were directly conferred *Sanad* in 1860.
19. F.P.D., No. 376-82, A, 18 March 1862.
20. Until they were conferred with *Sanads*, when they were designated as Feudatories.
21. *Sanad* of 1894 designated the Rulers as Feudatory Chiefs and their *Mahals* as Feudatory States.
22. P.S.O.C.S., *op. cit.*, p. 29.
23. *Ibid.*, p. 30.
24. Correspondences of Major Roughsedge dated 4 February 1810.
25. Supra, pp. 28-29.
26. Raghubir Sinha, *op. cit.*, p. 35.
27. Argyll, *India under Dalhousie and Canning*, (London, 1865), p. 120.

28. The *Sanad* of 1937 classified the Orissa Feudatory States into three distinct classes, *viz.*, A, B and C defining their status, position and limitations on the basis of their territories and income. This division produced a feeling of superiority which became deterimental to the people as well as the Chiefs.
The Samaj, 10 January 1934, (when the proposal of the *Sanad* and its classification was in the air). The powers of the Chiefs varied according to their varying groupism. All cases of 'heinous crimes' and capital punishments were committed to British Officers. They were also not entitled to try cases in which Europeans were involved.
29. F.P.D., No. 179-83, December 1868.
30. S.U.A., Memorandum on the Treaties, Position and Status of the Feudatory States of Orissa, p. 16.
31. In the defence of their territorial possessions.
32. B.J. (C). P., No. 2, 13 March 1843.
Selections from the Records of the Bengal Govt., No. III, *op. cit.*, p. 59.
33. *The Feudatory and Tributary States of Orissa Division and the Rules Applicable to them*, *op. cit.*, p. 23.
34. C.U. Aitchison, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 321.
35. *The Feudatory and Tributary States of Orissa Division and the Rules Applicable to them*, *op. cit.*, p. 17.
36. *Ibid.*
37. *The Deshakatha*, 17 November 1937.
Interview, Hare Krushna Mahtab and Pabitra Mohan Pradhan.
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39. H.K. Mahtab, L.M. Pattnaik, B.R. Mehta, *Report of the Orissa States Enquiry Committee*, (Cuttack, 1939), p. 24. (Hereinafter referred to as R.O.S.E.C.).
The Deshakatha, 11 May 1931.
40. S.U.A., Letter from the Commissioner of Orissa and Superintendent of Tributary *Mahals* to Government, 21 January 1839, Paras 24th to 27th.
41. *The Deshakatha*, 11 May 1931.
Interview, Pabitra Mohan Pradhan, Hare Krushna Mahtab.
42. *The Feudatory and Tributory States of Orissa Division and the Rules Applicable to them*, *op. cit.*, p. 17.
43. *Ibid.*
44. O.S.A., File No. 1081 S/24 May 1979.
The Samaj, 24 January 1934.
The Deshakatha, 17 February 1931, 11 May 1931.
45. R.O.S.E.C., p. 6.
46. *The Deshakatha*, 30 March 1931.
47. *Ibid*, 17 February 1931.

The Press also admitted that in exceptional cases, Political Agent like Mr. Scot was personally meeting the people and allowing them to put forth the grievances before their respective Chiefs.
The Deshakatha, 30 March 1931.
48. *The Deshakatha*, 17 February 1931.
49. F.P.D., No. 376, P (Secret) 1931.
Letter dated 26 April 1931.
50. But those statements have also been attested by *The Deshakatha*, and the *Report of the Orissa States Enquiry Committee*, p. 6.
Interview, Hare Krushna Mahtab, Pabitra Mohan Pradhan, Naba Krushna Chaudhury, Har Mohan Pattnaik.
51. O.S.A., File No. 1081 S/24 May 1979.
52. *Ibid.*
53. *Ibid.*
The Samaj, 24 January 1934.
The Deshakatha, 17 February 1931.
54. *Ibid.*
55. *Ibid.*
R.O.S.E.C., p. 52.
O.S.A., Acc. No. 515 (General Political), XII, I, B, p. 2.
56. In the State of Talcher, the Heir Apparent was the Sessions Judge; the second son of the Raja was the Revenue Officer, Magistrate and Controller of the State accounts; one brother of the Raja was the Assistant Revenue Officer; two of his cousins were Tahasildars; another cousin was the Chief Police Officer; another the Excise Officer and a brother was the Forest Officer.
R.O.S.E.C., p. 13.
57. Interview: (1) Nabakrushna Choudhury, the Congress leader,
(2) Surendra Nath Dwivedy, the Socialist leader,
(3) Parbitra Mohan Pradhan, President, Talcher Prajamandal.
58. *The Deshakatha*, 1 June 1931.
59. *Ibid.*
60. *The Samaj*, 6 June 1931. It was done to check the infiltration of Congress programmes of the Province.
61. R.O.S.E.C., pp. 18-19.
62. *Bethi*—Forced and free labour exacted from the people for the construction of roads and other nation building programmes.
63. R.O.S.E.C., p. 19.
64. *Ibid.*
65. *Ibid.* p. 54.
66. *Ibid.*
The Deshakatha, 9 December 1930.
67. *Ibid.*
68. R.K. Ramdhyani, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 96.
69. R.O.S.E.C., p. 54.

70. S.U.A., Memorandum on Treaties, Position and Status of the Feudatory States of Orissa.
71. *The Feudatory and Tributary States of Orissa Division and the Rules Applicable to them, op. cit.*, p. 21.
72. Government Order No. 255, P.D., 30 August 1895.
73. *Ibid.* No. 3705, I.B., 11 September 1905.
74. *Ibid.* No. 1233 P., 12 February 1907.
75. *The Feudatory and Tributary States of Orissa Division and the Rules Applicable to them, op. cit.*, p. 21.
76. R.O.S.E.C., pp. 289 and 290.
77. *Ibid.*
78. C.U. Aitchison, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 419.
79. Interview: Pabitra Mohan Pradhan, Prasanna Kumar Das, Surendra Nath Dwivedy.
80. R.O.S.E.C., p. 12.
    The Deshakatha, 1 June 1931.
81. Brajakishore Dhal, *Bhulibu Nahin* (Oriya autobiography) (Bhubaneswar, 1980), pp. 16-17.
    The Raja of Dhenkanal placed the seat of the judge Sri K.B. Roy just at his feet with folding hands to give an impression to the people that he (Raja) was above the law. The Raja had employed one uneducated and inefficient Anglo-Indian name Anderson as the Judge, who had received only elementary education from his tutor Fakir Patnaik and had never seen any other school or college. This the Raja did to show that he had employed European personnel.
82. *Sanad*, granted on 12 October 1908 by Lord Minto, Viceroy and Governor General of India.
    Sanad, granted on 15 May 1915 by Harding of Penshrust, Viceroy and Governor-General of India. But during the 19th century the Chiefs were required to consult the Superintendent of the Tributary *Mahals* as provided by the *Sanad* of 27 October 1894.
83. L.E.B. Cobden Ramsay, *op. cit.*, p. 89.
    Land Tenure and Land Reforms in Orissa, 1962, Board of Revenue, Government of Orissa, (Cuttack, 1962), p. 58.
84. R.O.S.E.C., p. 7.
    Interview: Pabitra Mohan Pradhan, Har Mohan Pattnaik.
85. *Ibid.*
86. L.E.B., Cobden Ramsay, *op. cit.*, p. 89.
87. Direct administration of the Government.
88. Eye-measurement and such villages were known as *Kut* villages.
89. L.E.B. Cobden Ramsay, *op. cit.*, p. 90.
90. *The Feudatory and Tributary States of Orissa Division and the Rules Applicable to them, op. cit.*, pp. 29-30.
91. *Land Tenure and Land Reforms in Orissa, 1962*, op. cit, p. 51.
92. *Ibid*, p. 52.
93. *The Feudatory and Tributary States of Orissa Division and the Rules Applicable to them, op. cit.*, pp. 29-30.

94. *Ibid.*
95. *Land Tenure and Land Reforms in Orissa*, 1962, *op. cit.*, p. 52.
96. *Ibid*, p. 51.
97. L.E.B. Cobden Ramsay, *op. cit.*, p. 91.
98. *Ibid.*
99. *Land Tenure and Land Reforms in Orissa, 1962, op. cit.*, p. 51.
100. *The Feudatory and Tributary States of the Orissa Division and the Rules Applicable to them, op. cit.*, p. 30.
101. L.E.B. Cobden Ramsay, *loc. cit.*
102. *Reports of the Administration Enquiry Committee, 1958*, Vol. I, Government of Orissa, Revenue Department, p. 308.
103. *Ibid.*
104. L.E.B. Cobden Ramsay, *op. cit.*, p. 92.
In some States they were also known as *Kharposh.*
105. *Land Tenure and Land Reforms in Orissa*, 1962. *op. cit.*, p. 54.
106. *Ibid*, p. 55.
Report of the Administration Enquiry Committee, 1958, Vol. I, *op. cit.*, p. 46.
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113. R.K. Ramdhyani, *Report on the Land Tenures and Revenue System of the Orissa and Chhatisgarh States*, Vol. I, pp. 3-10.
114. *Land Tenure and Land Reforms in Orissa*, 1962, *op. cit.*, p. 57.
115. *Ibid.*, p. 78.
116. *Ibid*, p. 79.
R.K. Ramdhyani, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 6.
117. *Ibid.*
118. *Ibid.*
119. *Ibid.*, pp. 3-10.
120. R.O.S.E.C., p. 54.
The Deshakatha, 4 May 1931.
The Samaj, 28 June 1933.
Interview: Hare Krushna Mahtab, Pabitra Mohan Pradhan, Naba Krushna Choudhury.

121. Interview, Naba Krushna Choudhury and Hare Krushna Mahtab.
122. O.S.A., File No. 919(S) 1978, letter No. A5(2)—C/40 dated 4 November 1940.
123. *Ibid.*
124. R.O.S.E.C., p. 10.
125. O.S.A., File No. 996 (s) dated 16 December 1978.
126. R.O.S.E.C., p. 10.
127. *Ibid.*
128. P.M. Pradhan, *Muktipathe Sainika*, (Cuttack, 1979), Part-I.
129. *Seer*—Weight measuring approximately 800 grams.
130. Interview: Pabitra Mohan Pradhan.
The Deshakatha, 10 February 1931.
131. *Ibid.*
132. *Ibid.*
133. Interview: Hare Krushna Mahtab, Naba Krushna Choudhury.
134. R.O.S.E.C., pp. 56 and 63.
The Deshakatha, 2 December 1930.
Ibid., 30 December 1930.
P.M. Pradhan, *op. cit.*, Part I, p. 38.
The Samaj, 24 April 1935.
The Prajatantra, 23 June 1931.

Bethi was the free and forced labour for construction and repair of roads, culverts, houses for the Chief and his cousins, digging wells and tanks. It included all the nation building and welfare programmes in the State.

Beggari was the free and forced carrying of luggages of the Chief or his officers on tour from camp to camp.

Rasad was the free supply of ration to the Raja, his cousins or his officers while camping in the rural areas. The villagers were required to provide the particular type of food with which the Raja or his officials were accustomed. (R.O.S.E.C., p. 19).

Magan was the free and forced contributions both in cash and kind on the occasion of marriage, death, etc., in Raja's family and purchase of automobiles, etc., by the Raja. In case of a marriage it was levied at the rate of 3 to 4 annas per rupee of rent. *Rasad* and *Magan* were collected in an oppressive manner being collected by the Department of Domestic Affairs known as the "*Suans* Department". The orders of the department were known as *Hu. Su. Di.* (Braja Kishore Dhal, *op. cit*, pp. 58-59) having the complete form *Hukum Suans* Department. The orders were issued in a stick of standard measurement. The stick was engraved with the letter *Hu. Su. Di.* In the night the officers would arbitrarily throw it to any body's house and the person from whose house the stick would be found in the next morning was required to supply a specified ration to the Raja or his officers failing which autocratic measures like fines and physical assults were inflicted upon. '*Hu. Su. Di.*' was a

terror in the hearts of the people. (Interview with Baisnab Charan Pattnaik).

Kara Samagri was the supply of provisions like paddy, rice, mug, *biri*, ghee, etc., to the Raja at half the market price.

Bheti—Tributes.

Shikar Bethi was free labour rendered by accompanying the Raja in his hunting excursion. The people were required to chase the wild animals in the jungles and it hardly matters if by-chance a peasant was shot dead by mistake. The labourers were required to carry their own ration and had no freedom to withdraw before the hunt was over.

Hatikheda Bethi—Like Shikar *bethi*, *Hatikheda bethi* was a chasing operation with flames and drums to catch elephants. Both these duties were highly inhuman and autocratic because the peasants were obliged to do those duties leaving their home, children and ripe corn fields for days together, even sometimes the hunting excursions exceeded a month during which they had to live on their own without deriving any benefit whatsoever. The catching of elephants was considered to be a symbol of high status for the Rajas. Clause IX of the *Sanad* (granted by Lord Elgin on 27 October 1894 and the *Sanad* granted by Lord Curzon in 1899) provided: "the right to catch elephants in your State is granted to you as personal concession and as a matter of favour but this concession is liable to withdrawal whenever it may seem desirable, either on account of abuse or for other reasons, and it will not necessarily be granted to your successor".

Even though there was provision in the *Sanad* to be withdrawn if found abused, the British Government never withdrew the hunting concession though the Political Department was made aware of the fact by the papers. A detailed account of the *Kheda* operation has been given by Brajakishore Dhal in his autobiography—'*Bhulibu Nahin*', pp. 29-35.

Ratha and Dasera Bethi were imposed upon people in the two big festivals, *i.e.*, Car festival and Durga Puja.

135. *The Deshakatha*, 30 December 1930.
136. *Ibid.*
The Samaj, 24 April 1935.
P.M. Pradhan, *op. cit*, Part I, pp. 38 and 42.
137. *The Deshakatha*, *loc. cit.*
138. Durga Charan Rai, *A Brief History of Patna State and its Enlightened Rulers*, (Bolangir, 1938), p. 41.
139. P.M. Pradhan, *op. cit*, Part-I, p. 45.
140. R.K. Ramdhyani, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 96.
141. Braja Kishore Dhal, *op. cit.*, pp. 75-79.
My own observation.
142. P.M. Pradhan, *op. cit*, Part-I, p. 46.
My own observation.

143. *The Deshakatha*, 17 February 1931, highlighted that approximately 96 lakhs of rupees were collected as revenue from 38 lakhs of population. In addition to this, feudal duties were collected. Thereby the total collection was Rs. 4.00 per capita.
144. R.O.S.E.C., p. 56.
145. *The Prajatantra*, 23 June 1931.
146. F.P.D., File No. 376 (Secret), 1931, p. 4.
The Prajatantra, 23 June 1931.
The authenticity of the statement has been attested by interviews.
147. S.U.A., English Newspaper Collections, No. 2, 2 March 1939.
148. Urmila Phadnis, *op. cit.*, p. 81.
Lord Northbrook reminded the Princes that they were to rule "not for their own benefit and advantage but for the benefit of the natives of India".
Lord Mayo told the Princes: "If we support you in your power, we demand good Government".
Lord Curzon said that the king must be "the servant as well as the master of his people".

3

Growth of Education and Political Consciousness

THE CONDITION of education in the States was very miserable throughout the 18th and the 19th century. During the British conquest of Orissa in 1803 the condition of education was so deplorable that anyone who could write a sentence or two in a palm leaf passed for a man of letters.[1] The people were extremely backward, and superstitious; and to be recognised as educated they were getting by heart a few Sanskrit epics. They were skilful enough with their iron pens and bundless of palm leaves but proved helpless when asked to write on paper with a pen. That was why the Company had to employ Bengalis to carry on its administrative business and the Oriyas were asked to be employed either as attendants or servants. This prompted the Magistrate of Cuttack, to observe in 1821.

> Scarcely a single real Oriya received a salary of more than ten rupees per mensem, . . . I scarcely know a single Oriya to fit him for being a common scribe.[2]

Observing this condition, for the first time, the Christian Missionaries, not the Company, pioneered the spread of English education in Orissa by establishing a Charity School at Cuttack in 1823.[3] The Company took over the management of the said school in February 1841. Subsequently, the Company as well as the Missionaries took the initiative in promoting English education in the British administered districts of Orissa. But for

want of a Printing Press adequate number of text-books were not available in Orissa and that impeded the progress of education. That was why with much difficulty they were printing Oriya and English books through the School Book Society, at Calcutta. Printing machine was brought to Orissa by the Christian Missionaries in 1837 to serve their own purpose and the Cuttack Mission Press was set-up.[4] The primary object of this press was to spread Christianity through the publication of periodicals like *Jnanaruna* (1849), *Probodha Chandrika* (1856) and *Arunodaya* (1861).[5] Untile 1866 not a single Press was owned by any Oriya in Orissa. Besides this, the orthodox and superstitious attitude of the people of Orissa stood in the way of the spread of education in English. They were not coming forward to join the English sponsored Schools apprehending conversion to Christianity. For example in November 1835, the Company had started the Puri Zilla School with 25 students but this institution was closed down in 1840 as the students of the conservative city did not turn up to join the institution.[6] However, from 1854, the condition of education in Orissa took a turn for the better due to the implementation of the provisions of the famous Wood's Despatch which laid down the modern education system in India.

From this it is evident that the spread of education in the inaccessible, un-developed and remote hill States was no easy task. The people of the States were deprived of the facilities available in the neighbouring British administered districts on account of the Government's avowed policy of non-interference. *Utkal Putra* reported that in 1874 *Garjāts* of Orissa had only 68 schools (including the *Pathsalas*) with 2341 pupils.[7] However, the fact that there was English education in the States cannot be overlooked. English education in British Orissa had its impact upon the neighbouring States, though in an insignificant manner. In 1901, only 2.7 per cent of the States' population could read and write.[8] In 1907-08, the total number of pupils, in the States, both in Primary and Secondary Schools was 47,468.[9] There were three High English Schools in the States of Bamara, Dhenkanal and Mayurbhanj with good boarding establishments attached.[10] All the three High English Schools were affiliated to the Calcutta University. Besides these, there were twenty Middle English Schools, six Middle Vernacular Schools, 145

TABLE 3.1 : **Area Population, and Number of Various Secondary Schools in the Feudatory States of Orissa in 1911-1912.**

Sl. No.	Name of the States	Area in sq. mile	No. of towns	No. of villages	Population census of 1901	Schools		
						H.E.	M.E.	M.V.
1.	Athgarh	168	—	192	43,789	—	1	—
2.	Athmallik	730	—	460	40,753	—	1	—
3.	Bamara	1,988	1	931	123,378	1	—	—
4.	Baramba	134	—	181	38,260	—	—	1
5.	Baud	1,264	—	1,070	88,250	—	1	—
6.	Bonai	1,296	—	217	38,277	—	—	—
7.	Daspalla	568	—	485	51,987	—	1	—
8.	Dhenkanal	1,463	2	968	273,662	1	—	—
9.	Gangpur	2,492	—	806	238,896	—	1	—
10.	Hindol	312	—	234	47,180	—	—	1
11.	Kalahandi	3,745	—	2,198	350,529	—	1	—
12.	Keonjhar	3,096	—	1,938	285,785	—	2	—
13.	Khandapara	244	—	325	69,450	—	—	1
14.	Mayurbhanj	4,243	1	3,593	610,383	1	5	—
15.	Narsinghpur	199	—	198	39,613	—	—	1

16. Nayagarh	588	—	775	140,779	—	1	—
17. Nilgiri	278	—	466	66,460	—	1	—
18. Pal-Lahara	452	—	265	22,351	—	—	—
19. Patna	2,399	—	1,850	277,748	—	1	1
20. Rairakhol	833	—	319	26,888	—	—	—
21. Ranpur	203	—	261	46,075	—	1	—
22. Sonepur	906	1	899	169,877	—	2	1
23. Talcher	399	—	293	60,432	—	1	—
24. Tigiria	46	—	102	22,625	—	—	—
Total					3	20	6

**H.E.—High English,
M.E.—Middle English,
M.V.—Middle Vernacular.

Upper Primary and 1,415 Lower Primary Schools.[11] In addition to these, 5,409* pupils were receiving instructions in 258 Advanced and Elementary Schools. The number of girls' schools was 95 with 4,864 girl students on roll. In the States of Athmallik, Dhenkanal, Kalahandi, Mayurbhanj, Nilgiri, there were special schools for the tribals and low caste people with a total of 6,342 pupils in them. There were eight *Guru* training Schools in the States of Athgarh, Athmallik,[12] Dhenkanal, Mayurbhanj, Narsinghpur, Nayagarh, Nilgiri and Talcher entirely maintained and managed by the Government agencies. The teachers were given monthly stipends.[13] The total expenditure being Rs. 2,50,000, the Government paid Rs. 37,000, and the States Rs. 1,36,000 and the rest, that is Rs. 77,000, was raised from the fees and subscriptions. The statistics shows a steady progress of Primary education but the progress of Secondary education was very unsatisfactory. This can be seen from Table 3.1 pp. 73-74.[14]

Thus, as indicated in the Table the Secondary education in all the 24 States was confined to 3 High English Schools, 20 Middle English Schools and 6 Middle Vernacular Schools. In all these schools three thousand one hundred and ten pupils were studying. The progress of the Secondary education during the two subsequent decades can be noticed from Table 3.2:[15]

TABLE 3.2 : **Schools between 1911 to 1932**

Sl. No.	Type of Schools	1911-12	1921-22	1931-32
1.	High English School	3	9	10
2.	Middle English Schools	18	26	30
3.	Middle Vernacular Schools	7	17	18
	Total	28	52	58

The growth of Secondary education was significant during the decade 1911-12 to 1921-22. There was a net gain of 24 institutions. The number of High English Schools rose from 3 to 9, *i.e.*, by three times. There was an increase of 8 Middle English Schools and 10 Middle Vernacular Schools during this period. But this tempo of expansion could not be maintained during the following decades, *i.e.*, 1921-22 to 1931-32. There was

an increase of only one High English School, four Middle English Schools and one Middle Vernacular School. The ten States that had the credit of running High English Schools were Athgarh, Bamara, Baud, Dhenkanal, Gangpur, Kalahandi, Mayurbhanj, Patna, Sonepur and Talcher. The States which were highly backward in Secondary education were Boani, Pal-Lahara, Rairakhol and Tigiria.[16] In the States of Bonai, Pal-Lahara and Tigiria there was not a single Secondary School till 1911-12. However, by the year 1931-32 each of them had one Middle English School. Educationally, Rairakhol was extremely backward and it is a matter of regret that up to 1931-32 there was not a single Secondary School in the State.[17] Secondary education had made a fair progress in the States of Bamara, Dhenkanal, Mayurbhanj and Sonepur. Bamara was having one High English School and three Middle Vernacular Schools; Dhenkanal had one High English School, two Middle English Schools and two Vernacular Schools; Mayurbhanj had one High English School and eight Middle English Schools (1936-37); and Sonepur had one High English School, two Middle English and one Middle Vernacular Schools. However, the progress of education in the States compared to the neighbouring British Orissa, was not satisfactory.

When the people of British Orissa had the facilities of College and University education with the establishment of Utkal University, the condition of education in the States of Orissa, by the year 1945-46, was exceedingly backward. By 1945-46 the States were having only seventeen High English Schools.[18] In addition to the ten High English Schools of 1931-32, new High English Schools were opened in the States of Baramba, Hindol, Keonjhar (two Schools: one at Keonjhar and the other at Anandapur), Khandapara, Mayurbhanj, (two Schools: one at Baripada and the other at Rairangpur), and Nayagarh.[19] Remarkable progress in Secondary education was noticed in the State of Keonjhar, which did not have a single High English School till the year 1931-32. By the year 1945-46, it was already having 2 High English Schools and four Middle English Schools.[20] The State of Mayurbhanj which had only one High English School and eight Middle English Schools in 1936-37, was having two High English Schools and 12 Middle English Schools.[21] The States like Bonai, Despalla, Narsighpur,

Nilgiri, Rairakhol, Ranpur and Tigiria had no development in the field of Secondary Education. Each one of them had a Middle English School, which was the only Secondary educational institution in the State.

However, the development in education in the States, though not significant, cannot altogether be overlooked. It had made considerable progress leading to the growth of an enlightened class which could provide Social and Political leadership to the people of the States. The *Garjāt* students who completed their Higher Secondary education went to the province to take their collegiate education. Apart from their studies, the students took a great deal of interest in the political developments of the time spearheaded by the National Congress. This infused a promising spirit in them and, therefore, they determined to take up the constitutional problems of their respective States on return.[22] This enlightened group included persons like Sarangadhar Das and Har Mohan Patnaik of Dhenkanal, Pabitra Mohan Pradhan of Talcher, Radhanath Rath of Athgarh, Kailash Charan Mohanty of Nilgiri, Gangadhar Mishra of Ranpur, Sarat Chandra Das of Mayurbhanj and Kapileswar Nanda of Patna. These persons came to the forefront of the popular movements during the succeeding years being inspired by the nationalist upsurage which had engulfed the adjacent British administered districts. The reports of the political activities that were gaining ground in the adjoining districts along with the high pitch of non-cooperation movements had their inevitable impact upon the States.

Moved by the miseries of the States' people who groaned under the authoritarian rule of the Rajas, nationalist leaders like Harekrushna Mahtab, Naba Krushna Choudhury, Malati Choudhury, Surendra Nath Dwivedy, Lal Mohan Pattnaik and many others extended their moral sympathy and guidance to the enligntened leaders of the States.[23] In response to the clarion call of Mahatma Gandhi to cut off all connections with British institutions like Schools and Colleges some promising students in the Orissa States left Schools and plunged into the movement.[24] Tenant risings were encouraged in Dhenkanal and

and Talcher in 1922, in Nilgiri in 1928, in Baud in 1930 and again in Talcher in 1932.[25]

The role of the Press, in creating political conciousness in the States cannot be underestimated. Up to 1866 there was not a single press in Orissa. Being encouraged by the Commissioner T.E. Ravenshaw, his *Sheristadar* (Record Keeper), Bichitrananda Das set up the Cuttack Printing Company in 1866 and sponsored a weekly newspaper, the *Utkal Dipika*.[26] The paper contributed significantly in promoting political consciousness. Papers like the '*Samaj*, '*Prajatantra*', '*Nabeen*' '*Deshakatha*', '*Asha*', '*Utkal Dipika*', etc., widely projected and vehemently criticised the atrocities of the Rajas in the States. With the growth of consciousness and graphic projections by these newspapers the States affairs ceased to remain secret and gained wide publicity. A time came when the Political Agent in a letter dated 26 April 1931[27] addressed to the Government of Bihar and Orissa suggested the prosecution of the Editors and Printers of the '*Prajatantra*' and '*Deshakatha*' and attacked '*Samaj*' and '*Asha*' for allegedly publishing false and inflamatory statements.[28] To arrest the growth of political consciousness among the people, State authorities banned the circulation of these papers.[29]

The writings of contemporary Oriya writers like Radhanath Roy and Fakir Mohan Senapati contributed a lot in exposing the atrocities of the Rajas and promoting political consciousness among the people of the States.

Thus, Western education, the Press and the writings of the contemporary authors widened the mental horizon of the people who became conscious of their political and civil rights. Education filled the hearts of the people with strong patriotic fervour and made them clamour for their legitimate rights. They raised their voice against the State authorities in an organised manner. To organise the people in a better way, organisations were set up. In 1937, Sarangadhar Das brought into existence the Orissa States' Peoples' Conference which was subsequently affiliated to the All-India States' Peoples' Conference. The formation of the Orissa States' Peoples' Conference led to the formation of *Prajamandal* in the States as its local agencies during the 1930s.[30] The people of the States presented their charter of demands to

the State authorities through their respective *Prajamandals* under the aegis of the States' Peoples' Conference.

Thus, the spread of Western education rendered remarkable service in arousing the mass from a state of stupor.

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4. J. Peggs, *Bapist Mission*, p. 238.
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8. L.E.B. Cobden Ramsay, *op. cit.*, p. 106.
9. *Ibid.*
10. *Ibid.*
11. *Ibid.*
12. *O.D.G.*, *Dhenkanal*, (Bhubaneswar, 1972), pp. 368-69.
13. L.E.B. Cobden Ramsay, *op. cit.*, p. 107.
14. *Ibid.*, p. 37.
15. V.B. Shastry, Unpublished Ph. D. Thesis on "Development of Secondary Education in Orissa, 1882-1966", (Utkal University, 1980), p. 172.
16. Probably because of this backwardness there was no political consciousness in the State and it remained quite un-affected by the *Prajamandal* movements of the neighbouring States.
17. Interview: Pabitra Mohan Pradhan, Har Mohan Pattnaik, Naba Krushna Choudhury.
18. V.B. Shastry, *op. cit.*, pp. 229-40.
19. *Ibid.*
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24. H.K. Mahtab, (ed.), *History of Freedom Movement in Orissa*, Vol. V, (Cuttack, 1959), p. 118.

25. *Ibid.*
26. N. Samantaray, *History of Oriya Literature*, (Oriya), (Bhubaneswar, 1964), p. 171.
27. F.P.D., File No. 376 P (Secret), 1931, p. 1.
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4

Peasants' Uprisings

AWAKENING IN THE STATES

POLITICAL EXPEDIENCY and economic considerations forced the British Government to keep the *Mughalbandi* separate from the *Garjāts*. The Chiefs in the *Garjtās* were given a free hand to rule over their subjects, so long as they were loyal to the British Crown. Even the Political Agents were advised[1]

> to endeavour to convince the Chiefs that he is anxious to interfere as little as possible, and to treat them as friends. He should never allow it to be thought that he welcomes, far less encourages petitions, against their authority or orders. His duty in regards to such States is one of general watchfulness and friendly advice and support . . . and to make them realise that it is the desire of the Government to refrain from all interference and that just and firm rule by them makes any such interference unnecessary.

The Chiefs were nothing but the Agents of the British Governments. Under the aegis of the Political Department, they were safe from external aggression and internal rebellion. In the absence of any effective challenge to their authority, the States continued to be unbridled autocracies wherein democratic institutions even in an elementary form did not exist. Exactions and repressions were the standard norms of the administration. The Chiefs were nothing but feudal relics and anachronistic

being propped by the Political Department.[2] They were the worst type of reactionaries, standing as barriers between the people of British administered Orissa and those of the Princely States in their desire to come together in fulfilment of common political ideas.[3] But for their loyal support, the British rule would have long ago crumbled to pieces.

No institution of British India, so epitomized the imperial presence of the British as did the Princely States. The Chiefs were not only content to play the role, merely of Tax Collector, and Magistrate; there were Proprietors-in-Chief, autocratic and sometimes benevolent. To assist in the discharge of its functions, in which the fiscal, the magisterial and proprietorial were considered happily to coincide, the British had taken up the ancient institutions of *Garjāts*. From time to time the British Government was conferring upon them titles, honours and protections strengthening their position in their territories. It was, therefore, hardly surprising that the Chiefs should have drawn the fire of the Nationalist opposition.

Orissa was a land of peasants who depend upon agriculture as the only source of their income. And it was the peasantry in the *Garjāts* which became the immediate and sole victim of the feudal oppressions exercised by the Chiefs therein.

The peasantry suffered untold miseries. They had no occupancy right over the lands they cultivated. A peasant was liable to ejection in spite of long possession and enjoyment for generations.[4] Lands were heavily taxed without any regard to the capacity of the peasants to pay. Neither the wholesome rule of Manu, the ancient law-giver regarding land tax, nor the scientific principles of land revenue assessment evolved by the experts of the British Government in India were observed by the States.[5] Insecurity of tenure and arbitrary increase in rents were the two stumbling blocks in the way of sound agriculture. Besides, there were no rules for remission and suspension of arrears in the land rent. A default in payment resulted in the confiscation of land, which was sold to the highest bidder,[6] whereas their counterparts in the British administered areas were paying remarkably low rent. In addition to these, were the feudal obligation,[7] failure to oblige was met with inhuman oppressions like flogging, molestation and raid by the State

Police.[8] Civil liberties were at stake. Detention without trial, deportation and confiscation of property were fairly frequent.[9]

The idea that they were Rajas, born to rule over the people and to adorn the gilded seats of the Chamber of Princes, intoxicated the best of men among them.[10] They wanted to augument their scanty resources at the cost of their peasantry whose reserve had already been exhausted. The peasantry was on the highway to utter ruin and destruction. The goose was no more in a position to lay golden eggs. It was no use increasing the already high land rent. Prostitution of justice and corruption of the public services were bound to follow. The traditional relationship of "*Maa-Bap*" between the Raja and the subjects had become a myth. Love was turned into utter hate. Both the Government and the governed despised each other. People began to chafe at restrictions and burdens. Unrest began to spread among the hardpressed peasantry. In the latter part of 19th century there were sporadic display of disaffection of the peasantry against the Rulers: Ratan Meli of 1863 and Dharni Meli of 1891 in Keonjhar, Kondh Meli of 1882 in Kalahandi, disturbances in Narsingpur in 1878, in Daspalla in 1800-90, in Bamanghaty (Mayurbhanj) in 1866 and Nayagarh Meli in 1893 were some of the instances.[11] But in all cases, rebellions were put down with ruthless severity with the help of the State Police and contingents of police from British areas whenever necessary.[12]

Similarly in the first three decades of the present century there were peasants' uprisings in a number of States against the corrupt administration of the Rajas. They were nothing but demonstrations of deep sense of resentment of the people in general and the peasantry in particular against the oppressive and arbitrary enhancement of rents and impositions of feudal obligations. These uprisings were neither organised nor even political in their character.[13] All the uprisings were confined to their respective States. Prior to 1930, there was no political organisation to organise and lead the people of the States unitedly to put up a common front against the arbitrary administration of the Ruling Chiefs. Consequently, the agitations were confined to the respective States, as a result of which it was very easy for the Ruler to put down the rebellions

ruthlessly with or without the support of the Paramount Power.[14]

UPRISINGS IN THE STATES, 1901-1930

Under the circumstances aforesaid sporadic uprisings cropped-up in different Feudatory States in the first three decades of the 20th century.

Bamara

During the course of twenty years from 1908 to 1928, there were as many as five peasants' uprisings in the State of Bamara, every time against the unreasonable enhancement of land revenue.[15] The leaders of the uprising were Hara Pradhan, Bhagbati Pradhan, Jagannath Garnaik, Daitari Hota and Bhagban Patel. They were all sentenced to rigorous terms of imprisonment and suffered tortue in the Jail. People co-operating with them were fined and some other leaders were banished from the State.[16] But the fifth rising in 1928 was against the Meefer settlement,[17] which increased the land rent to an intolerable extent. As many as 4,000 people marched to Sambalpur and placed their grievances before the Political Agent.[18] But no remission or relief was given to them. Consequently, a 'no-rent campaign'[19] was organised in which many of the *Gaontias* (village headmen) took active part. Six *gaontias* were arrested and imprisoned for three months, four were deprived of their *gaonti* rights, and some leaders lost their jobs.[20] Section 144 was served on Dayananda Satpathy and five other co-workers, several others seen in *Khaddar* were arrested.[21] All the five risings were, thus, ruthlessly suppressed.

Daspalla

In Daspalla, the aborigines raised the standard of agitation in 1913-14 over the issue of succession when the *Dewan* Bhabagrahi Biswal intervened, upholding the stand of the minor prince of Parikud, the grandson of the deceased Chief in place of Baisnab Deo, the cousin of the deceased Chief.[22] But the *Diwan* suppressed the rebellion with the help of the British forces and firmly installed the minor prince, acting himself as the Regent.

Mayurbhanj

Maharaja Sri Ram Chandra Bhanja Deo died on 22 February 1912, and was succeeded by his minor son Purna Chandra Bhanja Deo. Owing to the minority of the Chief, the State came under the administration of the Court of Wards. It was during this administration that a rising of the Santals[23] and other tribes took place in May 1917. The rising cropped-up when the tribals were recruited for a Labour Crops in France during the World War I.[24] The tribals assaulted the Recruiting Officers, looted the *bazar* and damaged the Railway. The rising was, however, temporarily crushed by despatching the armed police reserves from Cuttack and 100 infantry soldiers from Calcutta.[25] But the tribals continued to hold mass meetings and protested against the oppressive administration. In June, there was a fresh rising in Bamanghaty Sub-Division where the *bazar* of Rairangpur was looted and burnt and a State Constable was murdered.[26] Order was restored with the help of the military police and a number of Santals were convicted and sentenced to various terms of imprisonment.[27]

Dhenkanal

In Dhenkanal, towards the end of the 19th century there was a proposal for the enhancement of rent under a new Settlement. When one thousand people lodged a strong protest against it with the authorities the proposal was abandoned. Again in 1922, the *Durbar* enhanced the rent and modified the forest laws much to the inconvenience of the tenants, so much so that they rose against it in 1922 under the leadership of Maheswar Subahu Singh, Purna Chandra Mohapatra and Benudhar Panda.[28] However, the State had to make a compromise with the tenants, still it is to be noted that four of the leaders of the movement were charged with conspiracy and were sentenced to imprisonment for three years. This was a set-back to the popular movement.[29]

Nilgiri

In 1928, the people of Nilgiri started a vigorous movement against the collection of miscellaneous cesses like *Bethi* and *Magan* on the occasion of the marriage ceremony of the princess of Nilgiri. Over-burdened with rents and forced labour and

inspired by the message of the Non-cooperation movement in the adjoining district of Balasore, the tenants agitated against the new assessment.[30] They took the help of Hare Krushna Mahtab, the nationalist leader, under whose guidance an Oriya brochure entitled "Oppression in Nilgiri" was published and circulated widely exposing the oppressive and tyrannical rule of the State authorities. Thereupon, the Raja became more vindictive and oppressive which intensified the situation in the State.[31] As advised by Mahtab, about two thousand tenants left the State and took shelter in Balasore to get relief from the tyranny of the Raja. At the request of Mahtab, Rev. C.F. Andrews visited Balasore and was highly pleased at the non-violent and peaceful behaviour of the refugees. It was at his intervention that a settlement could be arrived at. The Raja agreed to pay proper remuneration for services obtained from the people and then the tenants called off the agitation and returned home.[32]

Talcher

The State of Talcher had probably the worst records of tyranny and oppression. Between 1911 and 1932 the tenants revolted thrice in the State mainly against the imposition of excessive rents and abwabs like; '*bethi*', '*beggari*', '*magan*' and '*rasad*'.[33] In 1911-12, the Chief imposed an extra tax of seven *annas* per rupee of land revenue. People under the leadership of Purandar Pani, Banmali Paramguru and Sudarsan Dhar protested against this but the State resorted to repressive measures by punishing the leaders of the movement.[34] Purandar Pani, Banmali Paramguru, Sudarsan Dhar were fined under Section 124 A.I.P. for petitioning to the Political Agent against the Ruler. Sadananda Pradhan and many others had to furnish security for good conduct, their offences being that they had protested against '*bethi*' and taxation.[35]

Similar demonstration reared its head in 1922 when the Chief reimposed '*bethi*' and '*magan*' for the thread ceremony of the *Pattayat* Pramod Chandra Deb. People from eight villages only rendered '*bethi*'. '*Magan*' was forcibly collected from all. Leaders like Bankanidhi Bhaktaballhav and Natabar Roy raised their voice against such cesses. This movement also met a similar fate like the agitation of 1911.[36]

Once again, for the third time, peasants' uprising cropped-up during 1930-32 against '*bethi*' and other miscellaneous cesses.[37] Dhobei Chhual Singh and Brundaban Pradhan took the lead and putforth a charter of demands and grievances before the Political Agent, Mr. Boston, but it yielded nothing substantial.[38] Dhobei Chual Singh, Brundaban Pradhan and Anadi Sahu were imprisoned for a year. Further, they were ordered to furnish bonds of good behaviour for having protested against the administration. Punitive police were posted in their village for one year on the suspicion that the villagers were holding secret meetings.[39] In this way the State suppressed all the three risings by repressive measures and the agitators were throughly demoralised by the arrest, humiliation and imprisonment of their leaders. However, these sporadic risings were not without any result; at least, the risings could check the growing despotism of the ruler. In this context one thing may also be noted that the '*Chasas*' (peasants) of Talcher formed an association in 1925 styled as "*Sobhagya Samiti*".[40] The object of the association was to bring about certain social reforms in the community and spread English education among them. The Ruler of the State, apprehending political awakening and disturbances, banned the association. Those who were in the service of the State and yet took part in the Association were suspended forthwith. The funds of the Association, amounting to Rs. 1,000 were confiscated. Thus, the Association was nipped in the bud.[41]

Baud

Land rents were increased in Baud in 1930 under a new Settlement. Under the new Settlement the rent was increased arbitrarily by 100 to 400 per cent in the different parts of the State. Abobt 2000 people went to the Raja to lay before him their grievances. But the officials prevented any access to the Raja[42]. Subsequently, twenty-seven Kondhs went to Sambalpur to get some relief from the Political Agent. On their return to the State, they were mercilessly beaten, fined and imprisoned[43]. Such was the relationship between the government and the governed; that the subjects were not allowed to see the Ruler, and submission of the charter of grievances was considered to

be a rebellious act. There was absolutely no cordial relationship between the Ruler and the ruled.

Although all the risings in different States, in the first three decades of the century were nipped in the bud by means of repressive measures, they were not altogether without any results. The experience gained in these futile and ill-organised agitations, though obtained at a heavy price, was far-reaching. It became clear to the people of the *Garjāts* that the oppressive rulers could preserve their authority only by the support of the Paramount Power and they failed because they neither had a common line of action against the authorities nor had competent leadership. They also learnt that since the agitations were confined within the four walls of their respective States it was easy for the Rulers to put down the risings. However, as years passed on, the growth of a slow but steady political awakening was observed when the people resolved to organise themselves properly and looked up to the Congress leaders for organisation and leadership.[44]

All-India States' Peoples' Conference

To the good fortune of the States' people, Congress leaders like Balawantray Mehta, Manilal Kothari and G.R. Abhayankar came forward with a sympathetic attitude and founded a central organisation at the All-India level called "All-India States' Peoples' Conference" in December 1927.[45] The objective of the Conference was to influence the governments of the States "to initiate the necessary reforms in the administration by the force of collective opinion of the people of the States".[46] It also emphasised the separation of the State revenue from the personal expenditure of the Ruler and demanded the establishment of an independent and supreme judiciary, separate from the executive. Finally, the Conference urged:

> that for a speedy attainment of *Swarajya*, as a whole, the Indian States should be brought into constitutional relations with British India and the people of the Indian States should be assigned a definite place and an effective voice in all matters of common concern in any new constitution that may be devised for whole of India.[47]

The All-India States' Peoples' Conference obtained the support of some more Congress leaders in the Calcutta Session of 1928 and the Lahore Session of 1929 of the Indian National Congress. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, in his presidential address at Lahore Session, said,

> the Indian States cannot live apart from the rest of India and their Rulers must, unless they accept their inevitable limitations, go the way of others who thought like them. And the only people who have the right to determine the future of the States must be the people of the States.[48]

The Congress also adopted a resolution urging the princes to grant responsible government to their people and to enact laws or issue proclamations safeguarding the elementary and fundamental rights of the people such as the freedom of movement, freedom of speech, freedom to hold public meetings and security of person and property.[49] However, the stand of Mahatma Gandhi was that the Congress should not interfere with the internal affairs of the States and emphasised that, only the princes could be prevailed upon to improve their administration.[50] He adopted a policy of non-interference because he believed that, in any event, a movement started from without could not be successful and wanted the people of the States to stand on their own legs.[51]

But when vigorous movements were launched in the States in the latter thirties the attitude of Mahatma Gandhi towards the States changed[52] and he maintained that

> the policy of non-intervention by the Congress was, in my opinion, a perfect piece of Statesmanship when the people of the States were not awakened. That policy would be cowardice when there is all round awakening among the people of the States and a determination to go through a long course of suffering for rhe vindication of their just rights. Whenever the Congress thinks it can usefully intervene, it must intervene.[53]

The said policy was maintained by the Congress leaders of Orissa. However, a radical group inside the Congress, called the Congress Socialist Party, demanded from the beginning that the Congress should take a more positive attitude towards the States and directly intervene in the administration of the States.[54] They called for a radical transformation of the political system of the States.

The All-India States' Peoples' Conference succeeded in securing the support and sympathy of the National Congress; and its leadership passed on to the hands of the Congressmen. To awaken the people of the States it sponsored local organisations like Orissa States' Peoples' Conference.

The local papers like the '*Deshakatha*',[55] '*Prajatantra*'[56] and '*Samaj*'[57] projected that the only remedy to the sufferings of the people of the States was to awaken the tenants in an organised way under the guidance of the National Congress and the All-India States' Peoples' Conference. Not many copies of such newspapers could find their way to the States, but whatever limited number reached the people it had its desired effect.

Inspired by the inflamatory statements in the newspapers and the contemporary Gandhian Movement in British Orissa, the elite mass of the States and the Congress leaders of the province undertook the strenuous task of organising the people. Under the guidance of Sarangadhar Das of Dhenkanal, Radhanath Rath of Athgarh, Madhusudan Pattnaik of Tigiria, Gangadhar Mishra of Ranpur and Bhubanananda Das, an eminent legislator of Orissa, the Orissa States' Peoples' Conference was organised.[58] With a tireless effort Balukeswar Acharya, Radha Nath Rath and Bhubanananda Das[59] convened the first session of the Orissa States' Peoples' Conference on 20 June 1931 at Cuttack under the Presidentship of Bhubanananda Das.[60] The Conference aimed at establishing welfare oriented representative Governments in the States with the help of the respective Rulers and appealed for their active co-operation.[61]

The formation of the Orissa States' Peoples' Conference on 20 June 1931 kindled a new hope among the people of the States. The elite class of the States and Congress leaders of the province assumed its leadership. However, in the respective States the leadership came mainly from the middle class peasants

who formed the moderate nationalist intelligentsia.[62] They belonged to the upper strata of the peasantry, *i.e.*, the rich and middle class peasantry like the *Gaontias*. Their's was a movement of the tenant-farmers against the abuses of the Chiefs, for liberal agrarian legislation and for the abolition of the feudal systems. The "non-payment of taxes" movement launched by Mahatma Gandhi in 1928 in Bardoli[63] inspired the oppressed peasantry of the States to launch similar agitations. The "no-rent campaign" in the State of Bamara in 1928 against the arbitrary Meefer Settlement was organised by the *Gaontias*. For this agitation six *Gaontias* were imprisoned, four were deprived of their *Gaonti* rights and many others were subjected to severe punishments.[64]

The *Gaontias* belonged to the class of well-to-do peasants and were respectable persons in the society of tenants. It is to this group that the rest of the village population looked up largely for employment, and for credit facilities. They served as an intermediary between the village mass and the administration. They exercised authority at the village level by virtue of their economic superiority and their status as a caste superior to those of the mass of the poorer peasantry, artisans and labourers. This class mobilised mass movement when worst affected by the agrarian policies of the State authorities.[65] That was why the movement launched by the peasantry often developed along lines of class collaboration; the poor peasants and the landless, either of their own will or under constraint followed the agitations of their masters. Pabitra Mohan Pradhan, a distinguished leader of Talcher, referred many a time the *Gaontias* as his friends and colleagues and did acknowledge their contribution in the organisation and the conduct of the *Prajamandal* activities in Talcher.[66]

Ofcourse in all the States the *Gaontias* did not supply the leadership. In Mayurbhanj, the *Sardars* and the *Sarbarakars* were loyally espousing the cause of the Chief. In such States the leadership came from the elite class consisting of the teachers and pleaders or there was very insignificant agitation like one finds in the States of Boani, Rairakhol and Tigiria.[67]

UPRISINGS IN THE STATES 1931-40

The thirties of the 20th century witnessed an unprecedented and remarkable change in the attitude of the people of the Orissa States. The freedom struggle that was going on in Balasore, Cuttack, Puri and Sambalpur districts under the leadership of Indian National Congress cast its spell on the people of the States. They could not remain unaffected by the political events going on in the neighbouring British administered disiricts. They also desired to carry on similar agitations in the States against their despotic Rulers for freedom from the shackles of various restrictions with regards to their civil and political rights.[68] The Government report records:[69]

> During the last few months there has been considerable agitation against the administration of Orissa States by the Congress workers and this agitation has been promoted by articles appearing in newspapers published in Orissa. . . . The Political Agent in a letter dated April 26, 1931 reported that numerous false and inflamatory statements have been published in the newspapers: *Prajatantra*, *Asha*, and *Samaj* alleging for instance that anyone in *Khaddar* is being arrested and that the Superintendent has passed orders for the *Gaontias* to be whipped in their presence if they failed to pay the rents.[70]

The uprisings in the States were essentially agrarian in character, based on peasants' economic demands such as the reduction of land revenue, rents and the feudal duties, and manned by the village folk in large numbers. In the Charter of Demands agricultural grievances were given the top priority compared to other demands.[71]

Orissa States' Peoples' Conference

Thus, with the active co-operation of the Congress workers the history of the States entered into a period of momentous change. The Orissa States' Peoples' Conference, formed on 20 June 1931 kindled a new hope among the people of the States to present their demands in an organised way. But the Organisation failed

to achieve anything and sank into a state of inactivity.[72] Successive attempts were also made to nip it in the bud.

In 1936-37, Sarangadhar Das, the Secretary made a fresh attempt to revitalise the Conference by convening its second session at Cuttack during 23 and 24 June 1937 under the Presidentship of Dr. B. Pattabhi Sittaramaya, who was also the President of the All-India States' Peoples' Conference.[73] Sittaramaya, in his presidential address emphasised the need for awakening the people of the States and said,

> they are in ignorance partly, and for the rest they are helpless. Their strength must be unfolded before their vision.[74]

He further said that the people of the States were entitled to form Congress Committees[75] in the States and if any constitution was defective or doubtful, it was up to the people of the State concerned to appeal to the Congress working committee to get it suitably amended. The Congress today contemplates the development of mass contacts and in shaping it, it is certainly within the range of practical politics to harness the immense latent powers of the masses in the States.

The Conference was largely attended by the delegates from the States of Orissa. It adopted nine resolutions and also a constitution. The 9th resolution declared that,

> the objective of the Conference is to secure the attainment of responsible Government by the people of the States, of fundamental rights of citizenship by the people, of direct representation for the people in the Central legislature, and to work towards the advance of their administrative, economic, educational and social condition by all peaceful and legitimate means. All bonafide residents of the Orissa States above the age of 18 who subscribe to the object of the Conference and pay an annual subscription of one anna are eligible for membership, provided that any member shall be entitled to continue his membership from year to year by the renewal of his subscription only.

The Conference comprised the following organisations:[76]

1. (*a*) Orissa States' Peoples' Conference.
   (*b*) The working committee of the Conference.
2. Associations of the people of the States of Orissa.
3. Local branches if the working committee of the Conference recognised.

The permanent office of the working committee was located at Cuttack. The Conference was resolved to be affiliated to the All-India States' Peoples' Conference.

The Conference in its first and fourth resolution criticised the mal-administration of the States as follows:[77]

> Whereas the people in general of the States of Orissa have no facilities to know the laws, codes, rules, regulations and orders by which they are governed, whereas it is their bitter experience that their lives, property and honour are not secure, and whereas it is high time for the benefit of the rulers and the ruled alike that this feeling of insecurity disappear, it is hereby resolved that this Conference is to take all such necessary steps for the purpose of impressing upon the rulers of the States of Orissa, the immediate necessity of declaring and publishing all those laws, codes and acts of the British India Legislature which they have adopted and also such other laws, rules and orders, having the force of law which they have framed for the administration of their respective States.

The fourth resolution of the Conference declared that:

> this Conference, while appreciating the spirit of the Government of India's recent statement regarding forced labour prohibition in persuance of the draft convention of the International Labour Conference in June 1930, records its emphatic protest against the continuance of the practice in a much severe form than previously in some of the States and particularly against the double extortion in the shape of permanent additional taxation

> over and above the usual forms of *Begar*, and urges on the Rulers the immediate abolition of every from of *Bethi*, either in the shape of labour, or of a money levy, or of both, and requests the Government of India to investigate how far in reality *Bethi* has been abolished in the States. The Conference also draws the attention of Rulers to the widespread distress among their subjects caused by the evil practices of exacting *Rasad*, *Magan* and *Bethi*, and strongly argues on them the total abolition of these.

The Conference also strongly urged upon the Rulers of the Orissa States for immediate conferring upon their subjects of the rights of occupancy on their holding and fundamental rights of citizenship. The fifth resolution regretted,

> the prevalence of various kinds of illegalities and of repressions in most of the States of Orissa and of occasionally morbid tastes of some of the princes leading to unspeakable events and hereby appoints a Committee of Inquiry composed of (*i*) Satish Chandra Bose, Bar-at-Law, Cuttack; (*ii*) Brajasundar Das, Ex-M.L.A. (Central) Zamindar, Cuttack; (*iii*) Balavantray Mehta, Secretary, All-India States' Peoples' Conference, Bombay; and with (*iv*) Sarangadhar Das, Secretary, Orissa States' Peoples' Conference as Convenor and requests it to investigate these illegalities and acts of repression and to prepare a report thereon and submit the same to the working committee of the Conference for such action as it may deem fit.

Resolution sixth of the Conference demands:

> (*a*) That responsible government be immediately introduced in all large single States that are able to bear the burden thereof and that smaller contiguous States be grouped for purposes of responsible government.

(*b*) That representative institutions be established on an elective basis for the purpose of local self-government, legislation, taxation and control of general administration.

(*c*) That the budget of the States be represented to and voted upon by legislative councils with a majority of elected members.

(*d*) That the amount of the privy purse of the Ruling Chief and his family be fixed by the legislature and any excess over the fixed amount that may be asked for in any year be voted upon by the legislature, and that the fixed amount be subjected to revision every five years.

(*e*) That there be an independent audit of the accounts of the States.

(*f*) That judical functions be separated entirely from the executive and that the personal intervention of the Rulers in the administration of justice to cease absolutely.

(*g*) That recruitment and other matters relating to public services of the States be subject to definite laws and rules.

Thus, the second session of the Orissa States' Peoples' Conference took keen interest in the affairs of the States; also it accelerated the formation of political associations to awaken the people and tried to focus the attention of all concerned in removing the grievances of the people. This situation took a favourable turn by the installation of a popular Congress Ministry in the Province in July, 1937 which whole-heartedly extended moral support to the cause of the States' People.[78] With such favourable turn of the tide *Prajamandals* (Peoples' Associations) were formed in the States. The *Prajamandals* had by then cast off all fears of the State authorities and were courageous enough to present their demand lists before their respective State *Durbars* and the Political Department of Government, claiming the introduction of liberal agrarian legislations and abolition of the feudal and semi-feudal duties and liabilities, such as forced labour, free contributions of ration to Officers

on tour and many other demands.[79] Further, they also demanded the natural rights like free engagements of lawyers in the courts, freedom of trade without any special permission, and introduction of representative Governments based on adult franchise. But the Rulers were neither prepared to recognise those associations nor to redress the wrongs or grant their just demands, rather they were bent upon curbing the growing tendency of alleged lawlessness among their subjects. Consequently, the problem took a serious turn and widespread unrest prevailed in several States. In this connection, it is worthy of note that the agitations in the States neighbouring the districts of Balasore, Cuttack and Puri (Coastal Orissa), were more acute because they were greatly inspired by the Congress activities and the leaderst herein.[80] Moreover, the head office of the Orissa States' Peoples' Conference was located at Cuttack and was working under the constant guidance of the distinguished Congress leaders like Hare Krushna Mahtab, Naba Krushna Choudhury and Sarangadhar Das. The agitations in the States of Western Orissa were very mild in nature and *Prajamandals* were formed in the late forties when the Congress leaders penetrated into those areas and aroused consciousness.[81] To understand the magnitude of the unrest between 1931-40, detailed notes for each State has been maintained.

Nilgiri

In 1928, the people of Nilgiri had launched *Satyagraha* movement against the illegal collection of *abwabs* on the occasion of the marriage ceremony of the princess, in which about 2000 people had left the State under the leadership of Hare Krushna Mahtab. The intervention of Rev. C.F. Andrews had reconciled their differences with the Raja and the latter agreed to abolish *bethi*, *beggari* and permitted the formation of associations.[82] In 1929, the people of Nilgiri joined the salt lumping at Inchudi led by Mahtab and were jailed for some months.[83] Then in 1931 they joined the Civil Disobedience movement in the District of Balasore.[84]

Thus being inspired by the message of the National Congress in the Province, the elite mass of the State started a "*Yuvaka Sakha Samiti*"[85] in the village Ayodhya in 1932 with

Hadibandhu Raj and Ramchandra Mohapatra as President and Secretary, respectively. The *Yuvaka Sakha Samiti* used to hold an intercaste dinner at Ayodha once a year in May to commemorate the anniversary of the *Samiti.* But in 1937 when the dinner was arranged the *Durbar* intervened; instituted caste cases against the *Samiti* and fined the leaders of the *Samiti.*[86] Thereupon, the State leaders sought the advice of the Congress leaders at Balasore. Sarangadhar Das, Secretary, Orissa States' Peoples' Conference held a meeting at Balasore in February 1938 which gave a fresh impetus to the *Yuvaka Sakha Samiti.*[87]

As usual, in May 1938 the *Yuvaka Sakha Samiti* observed the anniversary at Ayodhya and criticised the vindictive attitude of the State. Thereupon, the *Durbar* passed two Regulations (I and II) asking for the registration of the associations and permission for holding public meetings.[88] Few days after the declaration of the Regulations (I and II) three Congress leaders addressed a meeting without taking the prior permission of the State authorities and were arrested. Apprehending demonstration by the people the Ruler promptly passed Regulation III debarring demonstrations of any type. But in defiance two processions were led on 27 May and 29 May 1938 by the people carrying with them tri-coloured National flags. The processionists were arrested and tried under Section 188 I.P.C.[89] *Yuvaka Sakha Samiti* was declared unlawful and the Congress Socialist newspaper *Krushak* was banned.[90]

At the initiative of Sarangadhar Das and Hare Krushna Mahtab the *Yuvaka Sakha Samiti* formed the State *Prajamandal* at Gadiamal in Balasore district in June 1938 under the twin leadership of Kailash Chandra Mohanty and Banmali Das as President and Secretary, respectively.[91] A training centre was opened under the guidance of Gouramohan Das. On 11 July 1938, the day of *Rathajatra,* the *Prajamandal* addressed a public meeting criticising the State administration and led a procession demanding liberal agrarian legislation, the introduction of responsible Government and the abolition of feudal duties.[92] This they did defying the State Regulations I, II and III. Thereupon, the State reacted violently and employed all sorts of repressive measures like merciless *lathi* charge to break the procession.[93] About 120 persons were arrested, fifty of them

were fined a sum of Rs. 500 and others were sentenced to several terms of imprisonment.

On 12 July 1938, Sarangadhar Das issued the following press statements over the affairs of Nilgiri.[94]

> In Nilgiri, *Satyagrahis* are being beaten in public by the police force as well as by some hired *goondas* inside the jail and the impoverished lock-up in the only Middle English School house of the State. Quite a large number of the arrested men have suffered bleeding wounds, some have fainted, some are being beaten mercilessly and thrown into unfrequented roadsides or in the forest at the dead of night. The diet supplied in the lock-up is abominable. . . . Starting in a small way, the movement has gathered momentum, and within eleven days a total of one hundred and sixteen have been arrested. The jail which is understood to have accommodation for fifteen has overflowed, and the only Middle English School house has been requisitioned into service. Extremely heavy fines have been imposed upon the participants of the Movement. But the *Satyagrahis* have strictly adhered to non-violence. This is true *Satyagraha*, as Mahatma Gandhi expects us States' People to do. Nilgiri is fighting the battle for all Orissa States.

The *Satyagraha* then entered a new phase when the State authorities tried to collect the fines by attaching properties of the *Satyagrahis*.[95] About 5,000 people (majority being aborigines) according to an unofficial estimate, assembled at the village "Machuapatna" to offer *Satyagraha* before the officers sent to attach the properties of the volunteers.[96] Both the parties camped in the village for about five days. The *Satyagrahis* under Banmali Das were holding their non-violent and peaceful meetings and processions. Thereupon, the *Durbar* asked the Govérnment of Orissa for police help. At that time the Province was governed by a Congress Ministry, under the Premiership of Biswanath Das, which outright denied any police help to suppress the popular movement. In despair the Raja sought the help of the neighbouring Rulers of Dhenkanal, Keonjhar and

Mayurbhanj, and informed the Political Agent. The Political Agent visited Nilgiri in July last and brought with him police forces from Mayurbhanj, Keonjhar and Dhenkanal.[97]

The Political Agent, Major Bazelgette, accompanied by the Raja visited the village Machuapatna and had two hours' discussion with Banmali Das, the Secretary of Nilgiri *Praiamandal.* The Political Agent was highly impressed by the peaceful and restrained behaviour of the *Satyagrahis.* This prompted Sarangadhar Das to say[98]

> Nilgiri assumed the form of a "test case" for other States of Orissa. The people of other States are behind the Nilgiri Movement and will when time comes extend every kind of active sympathy and co-operation. Nilgiri is destined to be the torch-bearer for the suffering millions of Orissa States.

The Political Agent enquired into the grievances of the people and persuaded the *Prajamandal* leaders for negotiation. Kailash Chandra Mohanty, President of the *Prajamandal* demanded the release of all the political prisoners, remission of fines and the restoration of normal conditions as a precondition to a permanent settlement.[99] While the negotiation was going on, the Political Agent left for his headquarters at Sambalpur. The Ruler turned down the demands of Kailash Chandra Mohanty and proceeded to Dorkuli to seek the support of the aborigines.[100] On knowing this, Banmali Das dissuaded the people from meeting the Ruler and instructed them to boycott the Ruler's camp. In despair the Ruler returned to the headquarters and got Banmali Das arrested on 4 August 1938 as he was dissuading the people from meeting him.[101]

The arrested of Banmali Das was followed by the breakdown of the settlement talks and the *Satyagraha* assumed a new dimension.[102] They boycotted the *Durbar* and the markets and launched vigorous *Satyagraha. Satyagraha* teams started their procession from their Gadiamal Camp in Balasore district. On 12 August 1938, the State police made a *lathi* charge and subsequently fired upon 6,000 *Satyagrahis.*[103] Receiving this news Hare Krushna Mahtab and Sarangadhar Das hurried to Nilgiri.[104] The Political Agent also came down from Calcutta

and reached Nilgiri on 13 August 1938, and with his arrival the negotiation talks resumed.[105]

Mr. Soloman, the Collector of Balasore and Hare Krushna Mahtab tried their best to persuade the leaders of the *Prajamandal* for an amicable settlement. The *Diwan* of the State and Kailash Chandra Mohanty sat at the negotiation table on behalf of the Raja and the people, respectively.[106] A sort of settlement[107] was arrived at when the State authorities conceded to the demand of releasing all the political prisoners un-conditionally and simultaneously the *Satyagrahis* withdrew their decision of excommunicating the Raja and his *Durbar*. On 29 August 1938, the agitation was suspended.[108]

Hare Krushna Mahtab made the following press statements on the suspension of *Satyagraha* in Nilgiri:[109]

> I am glad to announce that the *Satyagraha* in Nilgiri has been suspended on the 29th August 1938 in view of the assurance of the Political Agent that the demands which could not be met by the *Durbar* will be considered by the Resident, Eastern States and decision will be given by him after hearing the views of the Nilgiri *Prajamandal.* Assurance has been given that as soon as the boycott of the officials is withdrawn general amensty will be granted and this is expected to take place very soon. Those who were arrested while the negotiation was going on between the *Prajamodal* and the Political Agent have been immediately released.

Further he aid,

> The *Prajamandal* put forth thirty-one demands out of which the *Durbar* conceded seventeen after discussion with the President of the *Prajamandal* and eight were refused by the *Durbar*. The *Prajamandal* considered these eight demands important and the negotiation broke down on the *Durbar*'s refusing them. These include abolition of *bethi* and *magan*, right to kill wild animals damaging crops, non-interference in social matters through the State machinery, control over the budget and introduction of responsible Government. Under the terms of the

> *Sanad* the *Durbar* is bound to accept the advice of political authorities on matters affecting the administration of the State. Therefore, the trouble centred round the policy that would be dictated by the British Government with regard to many of the demands that could not be met by the *Durbar*. So the assurance of the Political Agent that the Resident will give his decision on the disagreed points worsened the situation and I hope measures will be taken to ensure permanent peace in the State. I may mention here that agitation is going on in several other States against some of the practices prevailing there, similar in character to those prevailing in Nilgiri. Since the Resident exercises control over all the States in Orissa, his decision will have repurcussions in all the States in Orissa. It will be a happy termination of the Nilgiri struggle if it can solve the problems of other States along with its own.

Sarangadhar Das observed that the arrest of Banmali Das under Defence of India Rules was unlawful, and unfortunate. He was, however, happy over the results of negotiation between the *Durbar* and the *Prajamandal* leaders. He condemned the attempt of the Raja to form a parallel organisation called the *Prajamandal Sabha* 'with the sinister idea to destory *Prajamandal* Movement'. To him the agitation in Nilgiri was an example for the other States to emulate.[110]

Reaction of the Rulers

Over the issue of the unrest in the States, particularly in Nilgiri, there was a meeting of the Committee of Ministers of States at Saraikela on 25 and 26 August 1938[111] and it resolved the following issues unanimously:

(*i*) That the Rulers should consider the desirability of redressing the legitimate and genuine grievances of the people of their respective States.

(*ii*) That the propaganda of the Orissa States' Peoples' Conference should be challenged by counter propaganda by the Rulers in various ways, such as by

reorganising the Publicity Departments of their States and by the publication of pamphlets, leaflets and such other literature.

(*iii*) That fancied, unreal and illegitimate grievances should not be conceded as a result of any threat and to meet any menance the strength of the police in each State should be increased.

(*iv*) As regards Nilgiri, the Committee deeply sympathised with the Ruler and congratulated those Rulers who had rendered police help.

The Maharaja of Patna alleged that the Government of Orissa, Province and the press were responsible in provoking agitations in the States[112] and suggested that all the Rulers should be united and should take concerted actions to counteract the activities of the agitators; that they should impress upon British Orissa that cultural and economic progress of Orissa is not possible without close co-operation with the States; that the States should retaliate for the bad neighbourly behaviour of Orissa[113] by refusing co-operation in any economic or cultural matters and suggested the creation up of economic barriers.

Dhenkanal

As political activities began to lose their colour and fire in Nilgiri it is Dhenkanal that shot into prominence. It had probably the worst record of administration which prompted the Orissa States' Enquiry Committee to record that the reign of Raja Shankar Pratap Singh Deo Mahindra Bahadur witnessed,

> gross mis-rule and oppressions, barbarous cruelties, systematically practised on men and women, perversity of the Ruler and some of his brothers, and to crown all, the method that was adopted with the help of the military to suppress the popular movement directed against barbarous oppressions—all these and other facts brought in the report making out a fit case for deposing the Ruler. . . .[114]

The autocratic nature of the State administration can be well imagined from the extraordinary State Gazette dated 30 July

1938, which declared the State monopoly on *pan* (betel), a very common and favourite item of the mass. The price of *pan* in Dhenkanal was much higher than that of other States and British administered areas. People were not allowed to purchase betel from any other place than the jurisdiction of the State. Defaulters were punishable under section 188. The people, in protest, boycotted betel all over the State.[115]

The people of Dhenkanal who had all along been putting up with the State oppressions silently got a lot of encouragement from the Orissa States' Peoples' Conference and the agitation in Nilgiri, and raised the standard of agitation in the later half of 1938 to secure their just and legitimate rights. Initially, the people organised secret meetings in different quarters of the State in the name of *Yajna* and religious discussions to organise their State *Prajamandal* to fight for their rights.[116] Subsequently, under the leadership of Kashinath Mishra, Nabinchandra Swain, Mahesh Chandra Subahu Singh and Laxmidhar Sahu a public meeting was convened in the town of Dhenkanal where the State administration was condemned vehemently and the *Prajamandal* was officially formed on 27 June 1938,[117] with the following office bearers:[118]

President	—	Har Mohan Pattnaik
Vice-President	—	Mahesh Chandra Subahu Singh
Secretary	—	Laxmidhar Sahu
Treasurer	—	Braja Mohan Sahu

The *Prajamandal* formulated the demands of the people which included civil liberties, abolition of *bethi*, *rasad* and *magan*; right of tenancy, liberalisation of forest laws, establishment of responsible Government, etc.[119] Leaflets were widely distributed throughout the State and these demands were readily accepted by the people, who in large number bravely joined the *Prajamandal* and made it stronger. Then the demands were forwarded to the Ruler for his consideration. Thereupon, the State authorities issued extraordinary gazette expressing the anxiety of the *Durbar* for the welfare of the people.[120] To counteract the growing popularity of the *Prajamandal* the State authorities sponsored a parallel organisation called "*Prajamangal Samiti*".[121]

On 2 September 1938, the people of Denkanal organised a special meeting at Jenapur in the district of Cuttack under the Presidentship of Sarangadhar Das. The meeting was attended by over ten thousand representatives[122] from various villages. The State *Prajamandal* was recognised and its draft constitution was unanimously adopted. In addition to the office bearers, a Central Committee consisting of 100 members from different *Bisas* (Paraganas) of the State and a Working Committee consisting of 13 members were formed. It was also decided to organise village *Prajamandal* to guide the people in the remote areas.[123] The meeting displayed a quite but determined enthusiasm to fight for their rights and came to an end with the singing of National Song and the chanting of slogans condemning the autocratic rule, such as "Down with absence of law in the *Garjāṭs*" and "Up with the Power of the People".[124]

Branches of *Prajamandal* were opened in every village under the leadership of Mahesh Chandra Subahu Singh, Braja Kishore Dhal, Purna Chandra Mahapatra, Divakar Sahu, Netra Nanda Naik, Srikanta Rout, Shyma Sunder Sahu, Golak Bihary Patra, Braja Mohanty, Narottam Das, Krutibas Pradhan, Bhagbat Mishra and Sridhar Sahu, etc.[125] On 5 September, the *Prajamandal* established a market in the village Waakhama and boycotted the markets recognised by the State. On 6 September, "*Sunia* Day" (Oriya New Year's Day) was observed, but the people completely stopped the age old "*Sunia Bheti*" (Presents to the Raja on the *Sunia* Day).[126] On 7 and 8 September, two meetings were held in the town. Processions were taken out in which people sang songs and raised slogans demanding the end of their sorrows and miseries and the redress of their grievances.[127] The *Prajamandal* was circulating a leaflet known as "*Ranabheri*" containing the objectives and guidelines of the *Prajamandal* from time to time. It had its desired effect in the remote areas.[128]

On 9 September, the Secretary of State *Prajamandal* wrote a letter to the Private Secretary to the Ruling Chief for receiving a deputation of the people in connection with their demands. The *Durbar* fixed the time at 4.45 P.M. on 11 September with some of the following conditions:[129] (*i*) no person from outside should be included in the deputation, (*ii*) it should consist of five members only, (*iii*) no subsequent additions or alterations

to the demands would be permissible, (*iv*) all demonstrations, processions and public meetings should be suspended. The Secretary of the *Prajamandal* accepted only the first and the second conditions with regard to the members and the character of deputation and rejected the rest.[130]

The situation took a sudden and surprising turn in the evening of 11 September when the State police raided the *Prajamandal* office and arrested the President, Vice-President and the Secretary and many others.[131] On receiving this news about two thousand people gathered immediately and protested against the arrest of their leaders. Thereupon, the State authorities responded with brutal actions. Men and women were indiscriminately and mercilessly *lathi* charged, and were trampled by elephants and horses.[132] On 12th morning, the town was surrounded by armed police to prevent the people from entering the town. Sarangadhar Das made a press statement on 13 September 1938 that forty armed policemen had been requisitioned from Baud, and about thirty *Sikhs* had been recruited from Calcutta and that a *Punjabi* Officer was directing the whole operation. In the afternoon of 12 September, firing was resorted to in three different places,[133] near the Bhagirath *Sagar*, between Mandaba *Sahi* and Alasua *Hat* (Market) and lastly, in the Alasua *Hat* where about fifteen to twenty thousand people had gathered to consider their future course of action. During the third firing the people being already largely injured became violent and counter-attacked the officials.[134] This aggravated the situation by causing loss on both sides. One Sub-Inspector and a bodyguard were severely injured. But from the people's side the loss was far more severe. Four were shot dead at sight and more than one hundred were severely injured.[135] Malati Choudhury and Bhagabati Panigrahi of Cuttack took with them eight of the seriously wounded men while passing through Dhenkanal Station and got them admitted in the Cuttack General Hospital.[136]

Sarangadhar Das reported that[137] students from Cuttack Medical School had volunteered to render first-aid to the injured at the spot of the unhappy incident. In spite of such mobilisation of police force and firing the people were not demoralised, rather their number swelled to approximately 50,000 by the morning of 13 September 1938.[138] People from the neighbouring States of Athgarh, Tigiria and Hindol came forward in large

numbers to Dhenkanal. On 13 September they assembled near the station awaiting the arrival of leaders like Sarangadhar Das, Naba Krushna Choudhury, Hare Krushna Mahtab and Bhagbati Panigrahi.[139] With the arrival of these leaders a meeting was convened where the people were advised to carry on peaceful and non-violent agitation and to open negotiation with the State authorities. Sarangadhar Das challenged the atrocities of the Raja both in the Press and Platform, subsequent to which the Durbar in their letter No. 7772 P.S. dated 15 September 1938 announced the setting up of a committee for enquiring into the allegations but in practice nothing was done.[140] All the arrested persons of 11 September were released on the demand of the people and the *Prajamandal* lifted the boycott against the State officials.[141]

While the negotiation talks were in progress a special train arrived at Dhenkanal on 20 September carrying in it 200 British troops (K.O.S.B.)[142] and the inevitable happened. The town was surrounded and the *Prajamadal* leaders were arrested.[143] This prompted Sarangadhar Das to say,

> talks and promises of an enquiry committee were nothing but a smoke barrage behind which the *Durbar* have mobilised forces and are now launching on a campaign of repression.[144]

The State police assisted by the British troops entered the interiors of the State, searched houses and dragged the *Prajamandal* volunteers from their homesteads.[145] *Prajamandal* was declared unlawful, and the leading Oriya weekly "*Krushak*" was banned.[146] Har Mohan Pattnaik, the President of the *Prajamandal*, was arrested on 22 September by an extradition warrant issued by the State under Section 124A, I.P.C. and detained in the Cuttack Jail.[147] In Parjang, the houses of *Prajamandal* leaders like Maheswar Subahu Singh, Dibakar Biswal, Rama Prusti were demolished and burnt.[148] The villagers were thoroughly beaten and dragged out of their houses to build roads on '*bethi*', and their womenfolk were dishonoured.[149] The contemporary English dailies recorded,

> If at anytime a correct history of these incidents are written, the tragic stories of the Martial law regime in the Punjab will pale into insignificance before them.[150]

Following the raids of the State police with the assistance of the British troops the *Prajamandal* instructed the people to leave the State in protest. About thousands of people, men, women and children, resorted to mass exodus and settled in a number of camps in British Orissa, *i.e.*, Jenapur, Angul, Balrampur, Budhapank, Sukinda, Kalando and Gholpur.[151] In the campus the people suffered all sorts of privation but stood determined not to return unless their legitimate demands were fulfilled.[152]

Thereafter, Bhuban and Nilkanthapur, two villages had to bear the brunt of *Durbar* oppressions on 10 and 11 October 1938.[153] On 10 October at mid-night, forty[154] armed police and some officers entered the village of Bhuban and forcibly entered the houses, dragged the inmates and assulted men, women and children indiscriminately. They arrested eight villagers and continued the operation till about 3.00 A.M. of 11 October.[155] When the police came out with arrested men many of the villagers who had gathered outside protested against the arrest. In reply, the police opened fire killing two persons on the spot and injuring a number of people.[156] The river Brahmani was two miles away from Bhuban, and the ferry (*ghat*) was at Nilakanthapur, another village (right on the river). The police left the village at a running pace in the same night to cross the river. When the people of the village of Nilakanthapur came to know about the atrocities of the police in the neighbouring village gathered to plan out a retaliatory course of action. When the police asked the to arrange two boats for their ferry the villagers refused provide either their boats or boatmen. Then the police proceeded towards the ferry and got into three boats with the arrested men from Bhuban at 4.30 A.M. of 11 October 1938.[157]

Two boatmen and a young lad of 12 years named Baji Rout resisted this and got hold of the ropes of their boats. At this police cut the ropes and took possession of the boats. To coerce the unwilling boatmen, the police opened fire resulting in the death of four persons on the spot including Baji Rout.[158] Quite a number of persons were injured. Such brutalities and unpro-

voked violence were condemned by Sarangadhar Das as well as by the Press. He condemned the British Government for lending Police force to the Ruler.

But the Publicity Officer of Dhenkanal State, gave an altogether different version of the truth to the Press on 11 October 1938,[159] which was subsequently challenged by Sarangadhar Das in his Press Statement on 14 October 1938.[160]

According to the revised instruction of the State *Prajamandal* the people who had moved out of the State in protest returned to their respective villages in early October and launched *Satyagraha* inside the State by defying the orders of the State authorities.[161] While the people were launching *Satyagraha* the police opened fire on the *Satyagrahis* on 21 October at Tumusingh killing three.[162] On the occasion a Magistrate accompanied by State troops entered the village and insisted that the villagers should sign loyalty tickets. When the villagers refused, the Magistrate arrested five of the prominent spokesmen of the village. When the villagers protested the arrest, the Magistrate ordered the troops both to make a *lathi* charge and to fire on the innocent mass which resulted three deaths and injuries to many.[163] Again the State police opened fire on a mob of 1,000 at Katumuda killing one person and injuring a dozen others.[164]

On the occasion of the birthday of the Ruler, *i.e.*, on 31 October 1938, a *Durbar* was held where the Ruler announced some concessions as follows:[165] (*i*) Local cess was reduced from Rs. 0-2-6 to Rs. 0-2-0, (*ii*) Monopoly on *pan* was abolished and (*iii*) Free and unrestricted right of shooting wild animals damaging the crops, etc.[166]

Observing the widespread repressive measures and lawlessness in the State, the Congress leaders appealed to the Congress for timely intervention. Malati Choudhury, a member of All-India Congress Committee and the Secretary of Utkal Provincial Congress Committee, Naba Krushna Choudhury, an M.L.A. and the Secretary of both Orissa Assembly Congress Party and Cuttack District Congress Committee, Sarangadhar Das, the Secretary of Orissa States' Peoples' Conference and Bhagbati Panigrahi, the General Secretary of Utkal Congress Socialist Party and Editor of 'Krushak', issued together the following Statements on 22 November 1938:[167]

> As persons intimately connected with the Dhenkanal State Peoples' Struggle, we feel called upon to draw the attention of all liberty loving men and women of India to the grave situation that has arisen in Dhenkanal during the last one week or so. The fact that during the short period of two months the State police opened fire on villages on no less than seven occasions has perhaps no parallel in the recent Indian history. . . . The people are now feeling helpless and are not in a position to see what form of non-violent resistance can meet the situation. . . . We appeal to all workers for the cause of freedom and, over and above all, to Mahatma Gandhi and the leaders of our great national organisation to come to the timely aid of the people of Dhenkanal. In accordance with the Haripura resolution we, as individual Congress men and women have been helping the Dhenkanal movement to the best of our abilities but in the present unusual circumstances we find it impossible to render any further effective service from outside. We have, therefore, decided to adopt the only course left open to us, and that is to join the people in their struggle inside the State and to share in their sufferings.

Sarojini Naidu made the following Press Statements on 29 November 1938.[168]

> The movement in Dhenkanal appears to me to be a genuine and spontaneous mass movement born of a reaction of long suffering and patient tenantry and peasantry who have reached the limit of their endurance and seek relief from their untold miseries and prevention by a new and permanent mode of redress. I would remind those to whom these brave but sorely-stricken men and women of Dhenkanal turn for help and counsel that while every endeavour should be made to prevent their moral from sudden collapse due to exhaustion, coercion and fear, they must be told and taught that unity and strict non-violence can be the only weapon that will avail them in their struggle to win freedom from hands that have refused them the very breath of life.

Commenting upon the uncalled for support rendered by the British Government to the Raja, Gandhi said:[169]

> Even as the British Government as the Paramount Power are bound to protect the Princes against harm from outside or within, they are equally or a portion bound to ensure just rule on the part of the Princes. Hence, it is their bounden duty when they supply the police or the military to any State to see that three is a proper emergency justifying the request and that the military or the police will be used with becoming restraint. From Dhenkanal have come to me stories of fiendish cruelty exercised by the State myrmidons under the shadow of the police supplied by the Paramount Power. I asked for evidence in support of some of the unnameable cruelties. And I have enough to inspire belief. One reads in the press that some concessions have been given to people of Dhenkanal. I don't know whether the report is true and whether the relief answers the purpose for which the people of Dhenkanal are fighting and suffering. It is, however, irrelevant to the issue raised by me. I feel that the Ministers in the provinces are morally bound to take notice of gross misrule in the States within their borders and to render advice to the Paramount Power as to what in their opinion, should be done.

To give a peaceful turn to the agitation the Congress leaders of the province launched *Satyagraha* in the first week of December 1938. Naba Krushna Chudhury, Secretary of the Orissa Congress Assembly party arrived at the Merramandali Railway Station on 3 December and offered *Satyagraha* with 12 volunteers.[170] The contention of Mr. Choudhury was that being an outsider he was doing so because the British Government had sent troops to suppress the popular movement for the redress of their genuine grievances. When Mr. Choudhury and the twelve other *Saryagrahis* entered the borders they were served with an order by a State official, under Section 144, Cr.P.C. and were arrested;[171] but were released after a short period of confinement. Subsequently, no less than seven batches of volunteers offered *Satyagraha* in the State. Every time the

Satyagrahis were arsested and were set free within few days of detention.[172] The *Satyagraha* by the Congress leaders was stopped by a decision of the Congress working committee on 21 December 1938.[173] The decision to suspend *Satyagraha* by outsiders and to leave the agitation in the hands of the State *Prajamandal* was taken on the advice of Mahatma Gandhi.

When the Congress workers suspended their activities once again the people of Dhenkanal sought refuge in exodus and settled in different camps in the adjoining British areas of Angul. P.C. Joshi, the General Secretary, All-India Communist Party, visited the refugee camps and widely projected the Movement in the National Front,[174] criticising the atrocities of the Raja and suggesting to curtail his powers. Bhagbati Panigrahi gave a vivid picture in the *Hindustan Standard*[175] about the Movement and suggested to curtail the powers of the Raja as the only remedy to give relief to the subjects.

In 1939, as a result of the reports submitted by the Military Intelligence Bureau, the Political Department withdrew the powers of the Ruler and appointed a *Dewan*, Khan Bahadur A.K. Khan with full powers of administration. A.K. Khan made some administrative reforms and sanctioned economic reliefs such as relaxation of the terms and conditions of *bethi*, reduction of cess from four *annas* to two *annas* and the total abolition of forced labour.[176] He then prepared a budget allotting per rupee of expenditure, 8 *annas* for general administration, 5 *annas* for public works, health and sanitation, 2 *annas* for the Privy Purse which included allowances for Raja's relations and others, and one *anna* for the Residency Military police.[177] By this time the people had returned to their villages and showed their satisfaction over the minor changes and the gradual release of the leaders who had been arrested on extradition warrants.

Talcher

Tenants' uprising in the State of Talcher coincided with that of Nilgiri and Dhenkanal. Being inspired by the resolutions of the Orissa States' Peoples' Conference and the agitations in the neighbouring States the elite class in Talcher started organising the people secretly and on 6 September 1938[178] an open public meeting was convened at the village of Kosala in Angul where the Talcher *Prajamandal* was constituted with Pabitra Mohan

Pradhan, as President, Dashrathi Pani and Maguni Chandra Pradhan as Joint Secretaries and Gouri Shankar Pradhan as the Treasurer.[179] The other prominent leaders of the organisation were[180] Madan Mohan Pradhan, Krutibas Rath, Sudhakar Rath, Laxmidhar Choudhury, Bankanidhi Bhaktaballhab, Chandra Sekhar Rajballahab, Dhobai Chhual Singh, Digambara Garnaik, Jhal Das, Firingi Pradhan, Bichhanda Charan Pradhan, Dukhabandhu Sahu and Debaraj Garnaik.

However, it is important to note in this connection that prior to the formation of the *Prajamandal* organisation there was a students' rising in the State in January 1938.[181] The students' rising cropped-up when the Raja ordered that all the students of the schools should wear *Khaki* dress. These prescribed *Khaki* dresses were available only in "Pramod Store" at an exorbitant price which was run by the youngest son of the Raja.[182] Students like Rajkishore Das, Premananda Mishra, Kangali Charan Sahu and Srinibas Mishra protested against this. Thereupon, the *Durbar* rusticated the students who participated in the agitation and others were threatened with repressive measures.[183] The truth of the matter is simply this: this store had a heavy stock of *Khaki* dress which was not in demand at the time. The Raja wanted to help the son by making it compulsory for the students to put on *Khaki* dress. His son now saw a good enough opportunity to make easy money and charged a very steep price for the clothes to which the students protested.

The *Prajamandal* being constituted in September 1938, drew up a list of demands like abolition of feudal duties like *bethi, beggari, rasad, magan*; liberal agrarian legislations; right to form associations and hold public meetings and presented it to the Ruler for his consideration.[184]

Before discussing the movement of 1938 it is necessary to know something about the system of administration prevailing in the State. The Orissa States Enquiry Committee reported that the State was best known for its worst administration.[185] The rules and regulations of the State were supposed to be compiled in a book called "The Talcher State Mannual" but in practice it had no relation with the day to day administration of the State. Marriage fees, religious fees, unpaid forced labour and many other duties and taxes were not mentioned there. It was a show book meant for the Political Department.[186] There was no

rule of law, neither freedom of speech nor of association. No death or marriage ceremony could be performed or caste meetings could be held without the prior permission of the State authorities. Permission for these could be obtained on payment of fees at the following rates:[187]

(*i*) Marriage Fees—Bride 6 *annas* and bride-groom 8 *annas*.
(*ii*) Re-marriage—Bride 4 *annas* and bride-groom 6 *annas*.
(*iii*) Widow marriage—Bride Rs. 2-8-0 and bride-groom Rs. 3-0-0.
(*iv*) Child marriage—Rs. 0-5-6.
(*v*) Thread ceremony—Rs. 0-2-0.
(*vi*) Death ceremony—4 *annas*.
(*vii*) Atonement fee for the death of a cow—Rs. 5-0-0.
(*viii*) For having bed wound in the body (*Kitta Pattan*)—Rs. 3-0-0.

In addition to this, the State was exacting *bethi*, *beggari*, *rasad*, *magan*, etc., like the other States of Orissa. Any representation by the people conveying their grievances was considered sedition and the representating leaders were severely punished.[188] The Enquiry Committee reported that the Ruler had a band of *Doms* (untouchables belonging to a very low caste) in his employment and their job was to beat up people.[189] Beating, spitting and urination on men's faces were the common forms of punishment meted out to the helpless mass.[190]

After presenting the demand sheet on 16 September 1938 again about 1,000 people[191] of Talcher and Pal-Lahara State assembled at the same venue of Kosala and resolved to carry on *Satyagraha* movement till their demands were met. Instead of considering the representations, the Ruler declared Talcher *Prajamandal* unlawful and promulgated repressive laws to break the movement, alleging that the *Prajamandal* was exciting the illiterate people and creating chaos and confusion in the State.[192] Criminal Law Amendment Acts (Act No. XIV of 1908 and Act No. XXIII of 1932) were enforced declaring the *Prajamandal* unlawful and banning the wear of '*Khaddar*' and Gandhi caps.[193]

The State notifications created a great stir among the people who now thought of offering *satyagraha* in batches. *Satyagraha* consequently, was launched from the 5th October in batches, each batch consisting of not less than 20 volunteers. All the *Satyagrahis* were arrested and by 11 October the number of the *Satyagrahis* in the jail had risen to 200.[194] The imprisoned *Satyagrahis* were subjected to all kinds of torture inside the jail; they were severely beaten, some of them were even branded with hot iron on their buttocks,[195] and on their forearm '*Namak Haram*' meaning "ungrateful wretch" was also tattooed.[196] Those people who refused to render *bethi* were mercilessly beaten and their houses were raided and burnt.[197] The State police opened fire on the people at Chandrabil on 21 and 22 September, killing two persons and injuring many people.[198]

When repeated representations of the *Prajamandal* met with repressive measures by the State authorities, and the situation became highly intolerable leaving no scope for any non-violent movement, Hare Krushna Mahtab was compelled to communicate them the message of Mahatma Gandhi which was as follows:[199]

> If the people of Talcher don't live peacefully under the tyranny of the Chief, if it is impossible to move the agitation inside the State, if the Chief does not fulfil the genuine demands of the people and if the Political Department supports the Chief, then it is the only way for the people to leave Talcher. If about one thousand workers prepare themselves to reside outside Talcher, the British Government will be forced to consider their difficulties. The Chief and the Political Department will be forced to fulfil their demands.

This inspired the *Prajamandal* workers with remarkable zeal, enthusiasm and courage. Thousands of people left their hearth and home and came away to the neighbouring British district of Angul where they took shelter in improvised huts, in the forests and braved the bad weather, hunger and all sorts of hardship.[200]

The exdous commenced on 19 November 1938 under the leadership of Pabitra Mohan Pradhan, President of Talcher

Prajamandal. By the first week of December about 20,000 out of a population of 70,000[201] left the State and settled in nine camps in the adjoining district of Angul. These camps were at Kosala, Changuria, Puriabera, Kampsala, Natada, Bethianali[202] etc., and about 50 villages had been evacuated. Girija Bhusan Dutta, an M.L.A. of Angul, gave horrifying details of the exodus in his Press Statement on 17 December and maintained that[203] the cause of the exodus was mainly agrarian. The assessment of revenue per acre of land in Talcher was Rs. 2-5-6 whereas in Angul it was only Rs. 1-5-6.[204] Over and above the demands on land, miscellaneous taxes to the extent of hundred per cent of the land revenue were realised in Talcher which the tenants of Angul were not paying. All previous attempts to agitate against this uneconomical system of taxation were suppressed ruthlessly. But this time when the agitation began the leaders who were mostly *Sarbarakars* (village headmen) and well to do tenants took lessons from their past experiences and left the State and carried on agitation from the adjoining British areas.[205] The immediate cause of exodus was the notices that were served on 15 November on the people for payment of the annual State demands in full instead of in two instalments failing which properties, movable and immovable, would be confiscated; and when ripe crops standing on fields and grains on threshing floors were actually attached, the people having lost all confidence in their Ruler left the State *en masse* to escape royal oppression.[206] But the State authorities gave a different picture, they asserted that only about two or three thousands of people had left the State to meet His Excellency the Viceroy and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru.[207]

The Statesman[208] projected a vivid picture of the refugees and maintained that by 12 January 1939 the number had increased to 25,000. The refugees being mostly peasants had left their ripe paddy fields and *rabi* crops of the year 1938 and stayed in the camps till 26 June 1939[209] as a result of which they failed to cultivate the land and sow seeds for the year 1939. Thereby, they suffered the loss of two years' crops. But in spite of that the refugees led an ideal life in the camps. They were indoctrinated by the Philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi.[210] Meetings, newspaper readings and political teachings constituted the daily routine of the displaced people in the camps, *Panchayat*

administration was adopted.[211] A group of volunteers came forward to look after the education, health, food, relief and other facilities of the people. Each camp was kept under the supervision of a camp Chief.[212] Even though people of divergent castes flocked to the camp, there was no casteism in the camps. They lived in conditions of terrible privation, shortage of drinking water and provision of sanitation and security. Laxminaryan Sahu, President of the Orissa Hindustan Scout Association appealed the volunteers to work whole-heartedly to help the refugees.[213] Prana Krishna Padhiary, President of the Provincial *Kisan Sangha* also made similar appeals.[214]

Such an unprecedented exodus of the people drew the attention of many Congress leaders and philanthropists in the country including Gandhiji who brought these facts to the notice of the outside world through his paper *Harijan.*[215] In January 1939, A.V. Thakkar Bapa, a member of the All India Harijan Sevak Sangha, N.G. Ranga, an M.L.A. of Madras, Rev. C.F. Andrews, and Miss Agatha Harrison, the Secretary of the Indian conciliation group in London, and the member of the British Parliament visited the refugee camps.[216] They were all highly impressed by the non-violent spirit of the people and gathered a first-hand knowledge about the details of the sufferings of the refugees. They brought it to the notice of the British authorities.[217] Thakkar Bapa and Miss Agatha Harrison stayed in the camps for about four months and along with Hare Krushna Mahtab extended their help and advice to the refugees. Gandhiji appealed to various philanthrophic institutions and relief societies to help the distressed refugees and wrote,[218]

> It is not possible for Orissa Government alone to tackle the relief work. The Government of Orissa has not much money to spare. I hope that the Marwadi Relief Society will take up the relief work bearing in mind that labour should be found for the refugees.

Accordingly, the Marwadi Relief Society of Calcutta assisted by Jugal Kishore Birla came forward very generously[219] donating Rs. 15,000 on relief work. Gandhiji also directed the Congress ministry of Orissa to take up the cause of the refugees and stated;[220]

> The Ministers in Orissa may not sit comfortably in their chairs, if they do not succeed in sending 26,000[221] refugees of Talcher to their home with an absolute assurance of safety and freedom of speech and social and political intercourses. It is insufferable that the Congress, which is today in alliance with the British Government should be treated as an enemy and an outsider in the states which are vassals of the British.

The Congress Government in Orissa, at that time, was headed by Biswanath Das as the Prime Minister. The Congress ministry came forward to extend moral and material help to the refugees. It helped them financially for the construction of temporary thatched houses, for the supply of adequate drinking water and for minimum public health facilities.[222] The Ministry set up 9 temporary Police Stations for the maintenance of discipline in the camps and appointed 2 Additional District Magistrates to look after the whole affair. This apart, four doctors were appointed to see to the health problems of the refugees. Biswanath Das appealed to the Ruler to attend to the grievances of his subjects and asked both parties to settle their differences amicably.[223] Several journalists came to the camps and flashed their observations widely.[224]

The Chief of Talcher, however, gave an impression to the Political Department that there was no trouble in the State and that no tenant had actually left the State.[225] Even the Chief denied the truth of a telling photograph of the refugees in the *Statesman* dated 12 January 1939 for which he received a well deserved snub from the Editor.[226] As the *Durbar* was adament in its refusal to concede to the demands of the *Prajamandal* the refugees also with equal vigour, stood firm that they would not return unless their demands were fulfilled. At this the Political Department showed much concern and the Resident and the Political Agent discussed the matter with the Orissa Government several times but nothing could come out.[227]

Biswanath Das had to discuss the situation with the Viceroy and as directed by the latter, Major Hannessey, the Assistant Political Agent of Orissa States (North) went to the camps on 10 March 1939.[228] Introducing himself as the representative of

the Paramount Power he assured the refugees certain reforms.[229] The concession assured by Major Hannessey were published in the press and this created a new hope in all circles and all thought that the end of the misery of the people was in sight.[230] Then C.S. Searle, Political Agent, Orissa States accompanied by Joseph Woods, Captain of the Salvation Army visited the refugee camps and urged upon the refugees to return to their homes.[231] But the refugees asked for a written assurance from the Political Department, their complaint being though concessions had been granted earlier they were not implemented. In order to create confidence among the refugees a meeting was held on 21 March 1939[232] at Angul between Hare Krushna Mahtab, two delegates from the camps and Major Hannessey. E.C. Ansorge, Revenue Commissioner of Orissa attended as the observer of the Orissa Government. Other important personalities present at the meeting were Major Gregory of the Military Intelligence Department and Adjutant Woods of the Salvation Army.[233]

Major Hannessey came well prepared to the conference with all the papers from Talcher. On 21 March 1939, an agreement was arrived at with certain concessions to the people and it was popularly known as Hannessey-Mahtab Pact.[234] The Pact stipulated:[235]

(*i*) Reduction of the miscellaneous cess from 5 *annas* to 3 *annas* per rupee of rent, and an understanding that after the settlement to be started about next November the combined rent and cess will not be higher than the Angul rent and cesses with the same class of land.

(*ii*) The abolition of monopolies on the necessaries of life except hides, skins, horns, ganja, opium, *bhang* and liquors.

(*iii*) State administrative machinery should not be used for enforcing fines, etc., levied by Ecclesiastical courts and *Panchayats*.

(*iv*) Compulsory labour (*bethi*) should be abolished except when necessary for public purposes and then on payment of wages at ordinary rates.

(*v*) The abolition of special taxes (pool tax) on industrial caste.

(*vi*) There should be no victimisation of refugees on their return to the State.

(*vii*) Constitutional reforms enabling the people to participate in the administration through their representatives would be introduced as soon as the schemes were approved by the Political Department.

(*viii*) There shall be no interference with freedom of speech and meeting, provided that there is nothing subversive or disloyal to the Ruler or his administration in those speeches or meetings.

(*ix*) People should be allowed to kill wild animals in the State on their own property without any penalties or fees.[236]

Major Hannessey was absolutely confident that the concessions that he would recommend to the Ruler would be granted but he doubted whether Mahtab would be able to send the refugees back. In order to remove his doubt Major Hannessey secured the signatures from the leaders of the refugees assenting to the above agreement.[237] Major Hannessey went back to Talcher to announce the consent of the Ruler. But to the great disappointment of the people as well as of the Political Department the Ruler refused to grant the concessions on cess, which was considered to be most important by the refugees.[238]

One would be surprised if one examined the terms and conditions of the *Sanad* under which the Raja ruled the State. Some of the noteworthy points of the revised *Sanad* issued to the Rulers of Orissa States by the Vicerory on 26 February 1937 were as follows:[239]

3. That you shall do your utmost to suppress crime of all kinds in your States.
4. That you shall administer justice fairly and impartially to all alike.
5. That you shall recognise and maintain the rights of all your people and on no account oppress, or suffer them in any way to be oppressed, and that in parti-

cular you shall charge yourself personally with the welfare of the aboriginal population of your State.

6. That you shall act in accordance with such advice as may be given to you by the Agent to the Governor-General, Eastern States, or such other Political Officer as may be vested with authority in this behalf by His Excellency the Viceroy.

Under clause 6 of the *Sanad* the Raja was bound to act in accordance with the advice given by the Political Agent and had no option but to carry out his suggestions. But the Raja very successfully ignored the recommendations which annoyed the people as well as the Press.[240]

On 29 April 1939, after more than a month since the agreement, it was given out by the Resident that out of the nine concessions assured by Major Hannessey he would like to examine only one that is the concession regarding the reduction of cess and that the Ruler was ready to concede the remaining eight points. Further, he agreed to cancel the extradition warrants, requiring only a security bond for a limited period from those who wanted to go into the State.[241] This was the definite understanding that the Resident and his Secretary gave to Mahtab and Miss Agatha Harrison on 29 April 1939. Accordingly, the Raja made an announcement on 1 May 1939 conceding the demands as per the suggestion of the Resident.[242] But very surprisingly the declaration did not contain the above concessions, rather contained things which the Political Department had long ago declared abolished, *i.e.*, *bethi*. The Raja was of the impression that the refugees would come back after the declaration as the rain had set in and paddy season of 1939 was approaching.[243] But the *Prajamandal* rejected the declaration of the Raja[244] and once again renewed the agitation. This aggravated the refugee problem. In the meanwhile, the Congress ministry with the approval of the Political Department, cancelled the extradition warrants against 43 Talcher *Prajamandal* workers and released them on 12 May 1939.[245] They were detained in Cuttack jail since November 1938. Now the agitation was carried on with a greater vigour and the refugees stood firm not to return to Talcher unless their demands were fulfilled. To convince the Raja a conference

was held at Talcher[246] which was attended by the Raja himself and a number of others, like the Political Agent, Manmatha Nath Basu, Collector of Cuttack and Hare Krushna Mahtab and seven representatives from the refugee camps but nothing came out of it.

Pressure from all corners of the world was brought to bear upon the British Government in India. Miss Agatha Harrison raised the question of the refugees in the British Parliament. The American Press criticised the Government.[247] Rev. C.F. Andrews expressed great concern in his press note dated 5 May 1939.[248] Mahatma Gandhi made the following press statements:[249]

> Talcher promises to be much worse than Rajkot. In Rajkot it was the Ruler's word that was broken. In Talcher it was the Paramount Power's. In Rajkot the State atrocities were not the subject of scrutiny. In Talcher the sorry condition of the numerous refugees is almost everything. Hence, delay is criminal and may mean loss of one year's crop to several thousand cultivators. The other relief promised by the Political Agent, Major Hannessey, relates to paltry things so far as the Ruler of Talcher is concerned but they are serious for the people.

Gandhiji rightly felt that Hannessey had signed the document without any reservation.[250] To him the grievances were legitimate and their redress was long over-due. He failed to understand the reason why the Raja was not being taken to task by the British authorities. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru made a press statement on 30 May 1939 as follows:[251]

> Political Agents and Residents carry on in a leisurely way as if it mattered little or nothing at all how many scores of thousand of refugees were starving or how many others were being crushed by coercion. They make vague promises which they interpret in their own way. Among all the States in India, the Orissa States stand out today in their agony at Talcher of broken promises, and wandering starving refugees in Gangpur. Where large number have died and others are being driven to jungles.

The Viceroy, Lord Linlithgow, too expressed his deep concern at the state of affairs and desired to visit Orissa for spot enquiry. The Raja was warned that if the refugees did not return to their homes by the time of the Viceroy's arrival in Orissa, the State of Talcher would be confiscated and brought under direct management.[252] Thereupon, on 23 June 1939, the Raja made a proclamation fulfilling the demands of the *Prajamandal*.[253] The proclamation abolished forced labour, gifts; religious courts, protection of wild animals and collections of fines imposed by ecclesiastical courts.[254] Most of the demands were fulfilled and assurances were given to fulfil other demands. The Congress ministry of Orissa remained a witness to this assurance. Subsequently, the *Prajamandal* workers convened a meeting under the Presidentship of Pabitra Mohan Pradhan, which scrutinised the Chief's proclamation. After being satisfied with the proclamation they advised the people to go back to the State and on 26 June 1939 all the refugees returned to their respective homes with great joy and cheer.[255]

Now, a legitimate question may be asked; why did the Talcher *Prajamandal* accept the proclamation of the *Durbar* even though all the demands were not fulfilled. The answer to this is not far to seek. Mahatma Gandhi, who was constantly guiding the people of Talcher,[256] all of a sudden on 2 June 1939 announced his new policy in the States after his failure in Rajkot.[257] The new policy was

1. Suspension of Civil Disobedience movement in the States to be indefinite.
2. A willingness among the State people to open honourable negotiation with the authorities.
3. There should be no anxiety about those *Satyagrahis* who are in the prison as part of the plan of the authorities to put down the popular movement.
4. The immediate demand should be lowered in order to quicken progress.

This Mahatma Gandhi did because he "smelt violence in the air" and any mass movement in the name of non-violence would resolve into large scale violence and that would discredit the Congress.[258] Probably the people of Talcher and their

Prajamandal organisers could understand the stand of Mahatma Gandhi well and accordingly agreed to sign honourable negotiations by lowering down their demands.[259]

Accordingly, the leaders of the *Prajamandal* devoted themselves to constructive and organisational work. The head office of the *Prajamandal* was kept at Angul as before and its branches were opened in every village.[260] It was through these associations that special emphasis could be laid on peoples' education, health, and settlement of disputes through village *Panchayats.* People were taught about *Panchayat* administration and local self-Government.[261]

With the outbreak of the World War II on 3 September 1939, the British Government strengthened the hands of the Rajas by the Defence of India Rules. According to which all the suspected persons were arbitrarily arrested and the liberal institutions were banned. The Raja used it as an instrument of royal oppression to put down the peoples' movement for liberation. In the meanwhile, the Ruler introduced an advisory council known as *Praja Parishad* for different localities on the basis of caste franchise. But the *Prajamandal* protested against the system tooth and nail.[262] Thereupon, the Raja with the help of the Defence of India Rules banned the *Prajamandal*, raided the houses of the *Prajamandal* workers, prohibited public meetings, and was even bent on arresting the leaders. Subsequently, on 26 November 1940, almost all the *Prajamandal* workers were arrested under extradition warrants.[263] With the arrest of the leaders a lull prevailed in the State. The *Prajamandal* activities of the decade (1931-40) came to an end.

Ranpur

In 1938, *Prajamandal* was formed in the small State of Ranpur adjacent to the district of Puri. On 29 December 1938, the *Prajamandal* convened a public meeting at Sunakhola under the presidentship of Banmali Ram.[264] The meeting criticised and condemned the activities of the Raja and the *Durbar*; and formulated a charter of their grievances. The *Prajamandal* presented the charter of demands and launched a peaceful agitation under the leadership of Banmali Ram by the way of organising processions and demonstrations in the headquarters of the State till the fulfilment of their grievances. Thereupon, the

Durbar declared Ranpur *Prajamandal* unlawful on 2 January 1939 and arrested the leaders of the *Prajamandal.*[265] The arrest of the *Prajamandal* workers intensified the situation. On 5 January 1939[266] a huge crowd gathered before the Palace and demanded the immediate release of their leaders. The Ruler, in panic, wired the matter to Major R.L. Bazelgette, the Political Agent, seeking his help, who was then present at Nayagarh, the headquarters of the neighbouring State. The Political Agent soon arrived at the scene with a small force after clearing the road that was blocked by large branches of trees and big stones.[267] While he was conferring with the Ruler inside the palace, the crowd, many among whom were armed with primitive weapons like bows, arrows, *lathis*, axes and stones, felt very much agitated having heard the rumour that the Political Agent had killed two tenants blocking the roads while coming from Nayagarh.[268] Ignorant of the rumours when Major Bazelgette came out of the palace to pacify the mob, he was atonce attacked by them. In self-defence he broughtout his revolver and shot one man dead just to disperse the crowd. But the mob got infuriated and wild at the sight of the dead body and blood. They pounced upon him and within a few minutes killed him through brutal assault.[269] This murder took place on the verandah of Bimba Padhiari where Bazelgette had tried to save himself[270] hiding behind the wheels of a bullock cart. Thereafter, the infuriated mob threatened to break open the jail and the palace if the *Prajamandal* leaders were not immediately released. The Raja being thoroughly terrorised and panic-stricken ordered the Jailor to release all the political prisoners.[271] The whole episode took place within the space of a few hours. By a strange coincidence Hare Krushna Mahtab arrived on the spot just a few hours after the murder of Bazelgette in that fateful evening and promptly cautioned the people about the possible repurcussions of the incident and Government reprisal.[272]

The death of the Political Agent was followed by a reign of terror in the State. Jawaharlal Nehru in his Presidential address in the annual session of the All-India States' Peoples' Conference held at Ludhiana on 15 February 1939 stated[273]

> The reaction of the British Power to the tragedy of Ranpur was significant. Armed forces were brought from

> distant parts of India and a large concentration of troops in Orissa proclaimed the might of the Paramount Power. . . . The starving people fled away at their approach and the State of Ranpur became an uninhabited wilderness.

The police and the military forces almost besieged the State and martial law was proclaimed paralysing the civil life.[274] A special Court of Inquiry was instituted with B. Sivaraman, I.C.S. Joint Magistrate of Berhampur as the Enquiry Magistrate. Twenty-six persons were accused of the muder. Two were hanged[275] and others were subjected to transportation for life and long terms of imprisonment.[276]

However, the murder of the Political Agent was condemned by the Congress leaders like Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru and Biswanath Das, the Premier of Orissa. The Congress Working Committee regretted[277]

> at the killing of Major Bazelgette by a crowd at Ranpur in Orissa are of the opinion that such act of violence do great injury to the cause of freedom in the States. The Committee have welcomed the awakening among the people of the States and look forward to their deliverance, but they are convinced that resort to mob violence will delay that deliverance. The Committee, therefore, earnestly trust that the people of the States as well as those in other parts of India strictly adhere to peaceful methods in the struggle for freedom.

However, Jawaharlal Nehru, while regretting the murder condemned the concentration of troops by saying that[278]

> the troops came to overawe the peasantry of the States and to strengthen the Rulers in opposing their demands. They were utilised to suppress the movement for freedom. This was an intervention of the most flagrant kind on behalf of the Paramount Power on the side of tyranny and corrupt administration. Everyone knows that some of the States in Orissa are the worst and most degraded of their kind in India.

Sarangadhar Das issued the following press statements on 6 January 1939 on the murder of the Political Agent:[279]

> The act of violence committed on the late Major cannot be too severely condemned. . . . The whole policy of the Ruler in most of the Orissa States had been to provoke the people to violence by all conceivable means at their disposal, so that their own sins may not come to light. It is a pity that some ignorant and immature persons in Ranpur have so easily played into their hands without realising the consequences. For the time being the hands of the Rulers and their supporters have been strengthened and a situation has been created which compels me to advise the people of the different States in Orissa not to launch upon any mass movement of direct action in the present circumstances. I hope my humble advice will also be followed by the people of those States which are now engaged in mass movements. Although the policy of the Orissa States' Peoples' Conference is one of non-interference in the affairs of the different *Prajamandals* and the responsibility for all movements rests on the respective bodies, I am tendering this advice in anticipation of the sanction of my Committee.

Thus, at the palmy stage of the Peoples' Movements in the State the murder of the Political Agent proved to be the last straw on the camel's back and the people of Ranpur for all times to come forgot about their *Prajamandal* as well as the spirit of agitation, ultimately the State merged into the province of Orissa in 1947.

Nayagarh

The *Prajamandal* in Nayagarh was constituted on 6 June 1938 under the Presidentship of Narayan Nanda.[280] It submitted charter of demands to the *Durbar* securing political and civil liberties for the people and their involvement in responsible Government. On 27 December 1938, the *Prajamandal* convened a meeting in the headquarters of the State and resolved to agitate until the fulfilment of their demands. Thereupon, the Raja arrested the *Prajamandal* workers, which resulted in the gathering

of thousands of people infront of the palace on 30 December demanding the release of their leaders[281]. The Raja immediately released them and promised to fulfil their demands. But the insurgents were not satisfied with the promise and threatened to launch *Satyagraha* unless a proclamation conceding their demands was immediately made. Apprehending great tension the Raja sought the assistance of the Political Agent, Major Bazelgette. Major Bazelgette immediately responded to the request of the Raja and came cover to Nayagarh to observe the situation. While he was dealing with the situation of Nayagarh, the Ruler of Ranpur sought his help on 5 January 1939. Since the situation in Ranpur was more explosive than that of Nayagarh, Bazelgette had to make the fateful journey to Ranpur where he succumbed to the fury of the violent crowd in the same evening.

The murder of the Political Agent in Ranpur and the subsequent terrorisation in the State, shocked and unnerved the *Prajamandal* workers of Nayagarh so much so that they voluntarily suspended their *Satyagraha* without awaiting the directives from the Orissa States' Peoples' Conference.[282] Sarangadhar Das, in his press statement reported that after the departure of the Military Intelligence Bureau the *Durbar* resorted to victimization of *Prajamandal* workers on false charges and the accused were either sent to prison or made to pay fines. The Raja also issued a circular prohibiting subscriptions to the *Prajamandal*. The *Prajamandal* protested against the circular but did not launch any movement. The members merely boycotted the Advisory Council set up by the Raja and devoted themselves to the constructive programmes of the National Congress like cotton planting, spinning and weaving.[383]

Khandapara

Even though Khandapara *Prajamandal* was constituted in 1938, it was inactive until March 1939. In the first week of March 1939 about thirty thousand people of Khandapara assembled on the sand bed of the river Chitropala near Kantilo and raised slogans against the Royal atrocities and enhancement of rents and taxes.[284] Thereupon, the Raja declared the *Prajamandal* unlawful and arrested the leaders like Daitari Parida and Somanath Mohanty. About sixty leaders left the State to escape the royal warrant and stayed in Puri District for about a year.[285]

The agitation was revitalised once again in the month of July when people assembled in large numbers infront of the palace and demanded the recognition of the *Prajamandal* and their involvement in the Government. But as the Ruler turned a deaf ear to the demands of the *Prajamandal*, the people offered *Satyagraha* and resolved to continue the agitation until the fulfilment of their demands. But before anything concrete could be achieved, the movement was stopped abruptly on account of the directives of the Orissa States' Peoples' Conference in accordance with the Gandhian policy to suspend *Satyagarha* in the States. Then broke out the World War II which empowered the Rajas with more authorities as per the Defence of India Rules.

Gangpur

Gangpur was the fourth largest State in Orissa bordering the district of Sambalpur. Till the end of 1940 there was no *Prajamandal* organisation in the State.[286] But discontent cropped up among the aborigines[287] against the arbitrary enhancement of land revenue at the Settlement of 1935. For instance, land that was assessed at Rs. 1-9-0 per acre of land in 1910 Settlement had to pay Rs. 2-8-0 in the Settlement of 1935, while in the neighbouring District of Sambalpur similar land paid Re. 1-2-0.[288]

Thereupon, the tribals, particularly the *Lutheran Mundas* started a "no-rent campaign" and stopped paying any rent to the State. When the arrears amounted to Rs. 63,000,[289] on 9 February the Maharani Regent convened a meeting at Sargipalli to hear the grievances of the people and to induce them to pay rents. At the meeting four to five thousand people from over thirty villages submitted a joint petition to the Maharani Regent seeking the redress of the following grievances:[290]

1. The Settlement of 1910 to remain in force.
2. Forest rights enumerated in 1910 Settlement be restored.
3. *Chowkidari* tax of 12 *seers* of rice and 3 *annas* in cash per household be remitted.
4. The people to be allowed to the hides of their own cattle, instead of the monopolist appropriating them to himself.

5. Free transfer of land be allowed without any fee.
6. Total abolition of unpaid forced labour, *bheti* (Nazrana), imprest provisions, *magan pancha* (forcible contribution in cash or kind).
7. Representative Government in which the people can exercise the vote, to be introduced.
8. Permission to play bullock carts on the roads built by the people.
9. Tanks be dug and embankments built by the State wherever necessary for irrigation purpose.
10. Full right to shoot wild animals that damage and destory crops.
11. Freedom to sell *lac*, silk, cotton-seeds, *Mahua*, wax, etc., to any merchant in the State.
12. Co-operative credit society be established.
13. Local people be given preference in State Service instead of bringing men from outside.

But the Rani remained passive to the legitimate grievances of the people which intensified the discontent. The tribals under the leadership of Nirmal Munda continued their 'no-rent campaign'. Finding the situation unfavourable to collect rent, the help of the Political Agent was sought by requisitioning soldiers in March. The soldiers stayed for ten days and arrested a few leaders of the 'no-rent campaign'.[291] On 25 April, about 800 native Christians were holding a meeting under the leadership of Nirmal Munda in the village 'Simko'. Two platoons of troops under a British Officer accompanied by the Sub-Divisional Officer and the Assistant Political Agent went to the spot to affect the arrest of Nirmal Munda under Section 332 I.P.C. for attacking a chowkidar. But the crowd armed with crude weapons, with all their efforts, resisted the arrest of their leader. Thereupon, the police opened fire killing 28 Mundas on the spot and injuring a large number of people.[292] The version of the *Durbar* on the firing was that the firing probably prevented a repetition of what happened at Ranpur when Major Bazelgette was murdered.

The firing resulted in the arrest of Nirmal Munda and with his arrest the agitation collapsed abruptly. Thereupon, a public meeting was convened at Telenpalli under the presidentship of

Sradhakar Supkar which demanded the institution of an impartial inquiry into the firing.[293]

When the firing came to the public notice Jawaharlal Nehru, in most unequivocal terms condemned the Government's action and demanded an inquiry on it.[294]

> Among the States in India, the Orissa States stand out today—Talcher with its broken promises, and wandering starving refugees; Gangpur where large number have died and others are being driven into the jungles. It is astonishing that all this should happen and there should not even be a proper inquiry. I suggested an enquiry into the Gangpur firing by three very competent persons but the reply was 'no' because some private and departmental inquiry had already taken place. No one in India can forget the sufferings of these poor backward countrymen of our's doubly oppressed by Feudalism and Imperialism.

The firing demoralised and terrorised the people of Gangpur who did not dare to carry on their agitation further and silently yielded to the oppression of the *Durbar*.

Bonai

In the State of Bonai, the *Prajamandal* was formed in 1938.[295] In December 1938, the *Prajamandal* presented a charter of demand to the *Durbar* demanding the abolition of forced labour and contributions and the establishment of responsible Government. Thereupon, the *Durbar* issued a proclamation abolishing *bethi* except for construction of village roads, school buildings, officer's camp house commuting it in these cases to cash payment at the rate of 12 annas per rupee of rent. But the proclamation could not bring any satisfactory relief to the people who ventilated their discontent, through public meetings. Consequently, the Raja asked the *Gauntias* (village headmen and rent collectors) to persuade the tenants to accept the proclamation.[296]

No other political activities were noticed in the State till its merger into the province.

Sonepur

The Sonepur *Prajamandal* was formed on 11 December 1938

under the presidentship of Bhimasen Bhoi.[297] The headquarters of the *Prajamandal* was located in the village Brahman Turum in Sambalpur District. Some of the other organisers were Laxman Satpathy, Ram Chandra Satpathy, Pitambar Bhoi, Mohan Mishra, Chakrapani Mishra and Damodar Rath.[298] The *Prajamandal* was given a wide publicity in the villages and by March 1939 nearly 2000 people had been enrolled as its members. A charter of demands, demanding liberal agrarian legislation, abolition of forced and free labour and contribution, and establishment of responsible Government was drawn up. When Lokanath Satpathy and Mohan Mishra presented the charter of demands they were arrested on 15 March 1939.[299] Thereupon, the leadership of the movement was taken up by Bhimasen Bhoi, a low caste peasant. Along with 15 volunteers he offered *Satyagraha* on 23 March 1939 protesting the arrest of other leaders. In response to the call of Bhimasen Bhoi thousands of people assembled in the town to offer *Satyagraha*.[300] Consequently, the *Prajamandal* was banned and Bhimasen Bhoi, Achuta Mahakud, Banchhabata Pujari were arrested and fined. The patrons of the *Prajamandal* like *Gauntia* Dolamani Das were banished and their properties were confiscated. These drastic steps of the Ruler further intensified the *Prajamandal* movement.[301] But before anything more could be done *Satyagraha* was suspended in the States from June 1939 on the advice of Mahatma Gandhi till the revival of the *Prajamandal* movement in 1942.[302]

In the other States of Orissa, though the *Prajamandal* organisations had already been formed and the people had become conscious of their legitimate rights, being inspired by the widespread movements in their neighbouring States, their political activities were not so significant. All their attempts to start any popular movement against the *Durbar* were thoroughly suppressed by coercive measures like banishment, arrest, fines and imprisonment. Moreover, they were lacking local leadership.[303]

Pal-Lahara

In the State of Pal-Lahara, in connection with the holding of a meeting to form Pal-Lahara *Prajamandal* the popular leader Karunakar Behera and seventeen others were arrested and their

attempts to organise peoples' movement was nipped in the bud by royal orders prohibiting public meetings and the threat of imprisonment.[304]

Keonjhar

The State of Keonjhar was not free from abuse of power and administrative irregularities. Several persons who had tendered evidence before the Orissa States' Enquiry Committee vouched for this. But files which contained the evidence and statement of affected persons were clandenstinely stolen away by one Brundaban Dhal of Dhenkanal, a man who had been appointed by the Chief of Dhenkanal to do so. This exposed the names of those people who had delivered witness against him and his administration. The Ruler left no stone unturned in punishing them.[305]

The people of Keonjhar had assembled in two places, *i.e.*, at Balabhadrapur and at Anandapur to discuss their grievances and to present them to the Raja for their redress. But before anything could be done the leaders and convenors like Purna Chandra Mishra, Kangali Charan Panda and Bhikari Charan Panda of Balabhadrapur and Narayan Chakra and four other leading workers of Anandapur were arrested and imprisoned under Sections 124 and 420.[306]

Athgarh

In Athgarh, though the Prajamandal[307] was presided over by the most enlightened leader Radhanath Rath, it had no significant activities during the decade. The *Prajamandal* was banned[308] and civil liberties were curtailed. *The Samaj* of which Radhanath Rath was the Editor, was also banned.[309] About fifty *Prajamandal* workers left the State to escape torture by the Raja and stayed at Cuttack.[310] In order to appease the people the Raja set up Advisory Councils for eight *paraganas* in which the *Prajamandal* workers had a majority. But the Advisory Council had several nominees of the Raja who on purpose worked against the interest of the people neutralising the majority in the Council. Even the Central Council was flooded with royal nominees who formed a majority and nothing could be streamlined in the interest of the people. Always the Raja's will prevailed.[311]

Daspalla

In the State of Daspalla, the people being hard pressed by the oppressive regime of the Raja made a petition to the Political Agent in 1938, outlining their grievances and the atrocities of the Raja. When the Raja came to know the names of the petitioners he inflicted on them severe punishments like merciless flogging and heavy fines. The persons thus victimised were Ananda Pani, Ganeswar Behera and Rama Chandra Hota. This remained an examplary punishment to the people for raising their voice against the Raja.[312]

In Athmallik, five persons were arrested under Section 143 I.P.C. when they were found discussing the grievances of the people in the house of the *Sarbarakar* of Gobindpur.[313]

The Ruler of Hindol State, being pressed by the *Prajamandal* under the leadership of Dinabandhu Acharya, issued a proclamation on 15 January 1939 at Rasola,[314] declaring to introduce far-reaching administrative reforms in his State. He proposed to grant civil and political rights to the people by way of associating the representatives of the people in the administration and establishing rule of law. Besides, the rights of the people in cultivable lands, forest, etc., were also acknowledged to their benefits.[315] Though the State was first to announce concessions to the people these were not implemented and all the promises proved to be still-born.[316]

When the movements in the States were closing in June and July 1939 because of Gandhi's call to suspend *Satyagraha* in the States, the Orissa States' Enquiry Committee instituted in the second session of the Orissa States' Peoples' Conference submitted its report on the States on 18 July 1939.[317] The report exposed the prevalence of various illegalities and injustices in the States and suggested certain remedial measures.

The Orissa States' Enquiry Committee

The second session of the Orissa States' Peoples' Conference set up a Committee of Enquiry in its Resolution No. V with the following members:[318]

(*i*) Satish Chandra Bose, Bar-at-Law, Cuttack,
(*ii*) Braja Sundar Das, Ex-M.L.A., Zamindar, Cuttack,

(*iii*) Balabantaray Mehta, Secretary, All-India States' Peoples' Conference, Bombay,
(*iv*) Sarangadhar Das, Secretary, Orissa States' Peoples' Conference as its Convener.

The Committee was requested to investigate the illegalities and act of repression in the States and to prepare a report thereon and submit the same to the Working Committee of the Conference for such action as it may deem fit.

However, on account of the personal difficulties of the members, the Enquiry Committee was reconstituted on 6 June 1939 with the following members:[319]

(*i*) Hare Krushna Mahtab, Member of All-India Congress Working Committee as the Chairman,
(*ii*) Lal Mohan Pattnaik, B.A., B.L., Secretary of Orissa Christian Education Board and Ex-Secretary of Utkal Union Conference,
(*iii*) Balabantaray Mehta, Secretary, All-India States' Peoples' Conference.

The Committee held its sittings at Cuttack, Jajpur, Balasore, Jharsuguda, Sambalpur, Angul, Bargarh and Kaluparaghat[320] in June and July 1938. About 2000[321] witnesses were examined. In the final stage of preparation of the report, the Committee was assisted by a legal expert and the work was completed on 18 July 1939.[322]

The report contained the following illegalities, excesses and acts of repressions:[323]

(*a*) Restriction of grazing right and loss of forest rights in general.
(*b*) Levy of Hospital cess and inadequate medical facilities.
(*c*) Restraint on free export of paddy and rice and of *rabi* crops.
(*d*) *Rasad*, *Magan*, *Bethi*, etc.
(*e*) (*i*) Not recording evidence in court cases.
(*ii*) Lack of facilities for defence in court cases.

(*f*) Trade monopolies of salt, kerosene, *pan* (betel leaf) *biri*, meat, cane-crushing mills, etc.

(*g*) *Bethi* in regard to *shikar*, road making, extinguishing forest fires and other purposes.

(*h*) Demand of premium on mortgages of Rs. 8 per man and on sales of Rs. 10 in some of the States.

(*i*) Interference in Social matters.

(*j*) Interference with educational budget and demand for building and repairing schools by the people despite the levy of an educational cess.

(*k*) Increase of rent by resettlement by 200 to 300 per cent in some of the States.

(*l*) Occurrences of unspeakable events arising from a certain morbidity of taste and temperament.

Before the first formal sitting of the Committee in June 1938, a set of questionnaires was prepared and circulated in the Orissa States.[324] Mahtab wrote letters to the Chiefs inviting their views on the work but there was absolutely no response from them. Only the *Durbar* of Patna had sent a copy of its Annual Administration Report.[325]

The detailed findings of the Committee came as a shocking revelation to many, about the miserable plight of the States' subjects. The Committee, while putting forth the findings and recommendations, suggested that

> any other impartial committee of enquiry is sure to arrive at the same conclusions and welcomed the appointment of such a Commission.[326]

Findings

The Committee observed with alarm the frequency and number of uprisings which the States in Orissa had witnessed during the past 25 years being prompted by agrarian economic and political grievances. People in Baud, Bamara, Rairakhol, Ranpur, Nayagarh, Nilgiri, Talcher, and many other States have spontaneously risen several times against arbitrary enhancement of land rent, *bethi* and other crying economic and political grievances.

The Report brought to light the following:[327]

1. In most of the States, it was not possible for the public to secure authentic and adequate information regarding the administration, moral and material progress as well as the social, economic and political conditions prevailing therein. Though the Annual Administration Reports were published in the States, the public were not aware of their publications and contents.
2. There was no rule of law. Even proper codification of laws was absent. Rules, regulations and circulars which governed the normal relations of the Rulers with their people were not generally published and made available to the public.
3. Except in rare cases, there was no proper budget system.
4. There was no clear distinction between public treasury and the Raja's Privy Purse.
5. The Rulers spent directly or indirectly the major portion of the State revenues on themselves, their families and dependants.
6. Accounts were generally not kept according to the approved system and there was no independent audit of the same.
7. There was a crushing system of taxation with unusually high land rents except in one or two cases, and numerous taxes and cesses leading to progressive deterioration of the economic condition of the peasantry. An export duty on the main agricultural produce worked to the detriment of trade and harmed the interests of the peasantry.
8. Monopolies in certain vital daily necessities of life raised prices, reduced their quality and provided a handle to petty officials, often times with the connivance or direct encouragement of the Rajas and *Dewans* themselves to oppress the people.
9. No fundamental rights of citizenship were recognised. Civil liberty was crushed and the people were daily oppressed with a felling of potential danger to the

security of life and property. It was only recently that the two States—Mayurbhanj and Nilgiri allowed a partial exercise of the right of free speech and association. The *Prajamandals* in Dhenkanal, Talcher, Nayagarh, Ranpur, Athgarh, Khandapara, Sonepur and Tigiria States were considered unlawful. Even newspapers were not allowed in some States, though they were not banned by any notifications.

10. The peasants in almost all States had no rights on agricultural lands. They could neither sell, nor mortgage nor transfer it without the permission of the authorities. High mutation fees were levied even when permitted for transfer. Right of adoption was not recognised in all States. The cultivator was a mere tenant at will, liable to be ejected at the whim of the Ruler or the State authorities. There were innumerable instances of ejectment of the peasants and confiscation of their land in almost every State.
11. *Bethi, Beggari, Rasad, Magan*: Forced labour and contributions were widely prevalent. Regulations sanctioned by the Ruler and the Political Agent were usually set at naught and people continued to groan under the weight of these systems and usages.
12. Of the *bethi* for *Kheda* operations to catch elephants, still in vogue in several States, was intensely hated by the public. *Bethi* for *shikar* excursions with its attendant, still persisted.
13. Interference by State authorities in social and religious life of the people and the exercise of wide powers of control over them through caste *Panchayats* and ecclesiastical courts, impede the march of progress and serve as engines of oppressions.
14. There was no security of tenure for the Public services. Nepotism was widespread in the matter of recruitment.
15. Bribery and corruption prevailed from top to bottom with very rare exceptions in the administration of the State.
16. People were not allowed to protect their crop by killing wild animals that damaged the crops.

17. There were hardly any local self-government institutions, worth in name in these States. Civic amenities in both rural and urban areas were, therefore, almost non-existent.
18. People were not allowed to ply their bullock carts on some of the roads constructed by themselves through *bethi* service.
19. The rights of the people about grazing, fuel and use of forest timber were progressively and seriously encroached upon. Reserved areas in forest were increased, more species of wood were added to the reserved, and high fees were levied for the use of forest articles for daily domestic or agricultural purposes.
20. There was fairly big aboriginal population in these States. No serious efforts for their social and economic uplift were visible.
21. The judiciary was entirely dependent upon the Rulers and impartial justice was not easily available.
22. Nation-building departments were being systematically starved. The quality of what little work they produced was very poor.
23. Generally speaking, the States of Orissa were very backward, ill-governed, and the people felt much harassed. They were unable as isolated units to provide any day a tolerable system of administration that would be in keeping with the spirit of the times and satisfy the modest need of the people.
24. Coming specially to those States where gross misrule for years gave occasion to popular risings specially in 1938, and where the services of British troops had been requisitioned to suppress the legitimate movements were the States of Dhenkanal, Talcher and Gangpur.

Before placing the recommendations the Committee stated that[328] the prevailing unrest and discontent in the Orissa States were not a temporary affair. They had their roots in a situation which was full of potential danger. No temporary expedients or make-shifts were likely to solve the problem.

One would have to go deep into the very root in search of remedies which would meet the requirements of the situation. Small States with modest population and scanty resources of revenue were brought face to face with vast autonomous provinces where people zealously exercised their new found rights of self-government and self-determination. Most of the States border on one or more of the districts in the province of Orissa. The image of the Indian National Congress and its leader Mahatma Gandhi had penetrated into the forest-bound hinterland of the States. The popular Governments just on the other side of the geographical boundary of the States, had kindled in the hearts of the States' People an ambition to deal with the problems confronting them in the same manner. The agrarian legislation[329] of the popular Cabinets made its way into the jungles of the States[330] within no time.

The inability of the State authorities to provide popular and enlightened administration in the areas under their charge and misrule and oppression which widely prevailed there, were the major factors responsible for the spirit of revolt. It was, therefore, imperative that "a radical solution of the problem had to be carefully thought out and applied to".[331]

Recommendations

The Committee's recommendations bore an imprint of Congress ideology. In order to facilitate the establishment of representative Government in place of monarchical autocracy, the Committee recommended immediate cancellation of *Sanads* granted to the Feudatory Chiefs. The Rajas may be treated as landlords of permanently settled Estates such as Aul, Kujang and Kanika.[332] That this could be done without violating the rights of these Chiefs.

The acceptance of this recommendation would have brought these Estates under the jurisdiction of the provincial Government and the people concerned would have been able to participate in the administration.[333] Before such a step could be taken, the Committee also suggested some fresh but urgent measures to be taken first for the restoration of normalcy in the States and for the relief of the people. The most important were: the power of supervision over the administration of the States so long entrusted to the Resident should be handed over

to the provincial Government; full civil liberty should be granted to the people; and a permanent and impartial judiciary should be installed in the States.[334]

These recommendations of the Committee were welcomed by *The Statesman* of Calcutta.[335] When a copy of the report was presented to Lord Linlithgow, he remarked that the Enquiry Committee Report would serve as a ray of light in the dark corners of the country.[336] Sarangadhar Das gave a wide publicity to the Report by distributing the copies all over India.[337] In his letter to R.D. Kapadia, General Secretary, All-India States' Peoples' Conference he wrote,[338]

> the Report of the Enquiry Committee is a comprehensive, social, economic and political survey for any Indian State or a group of States. The recommendation, *i.e.*, the cancellation of *Sanads* is also unique and has found support in the Indian Press.

The Report of the Enquiry Committee was a milestone in the history of Peoples' movements for economic and political justice in the States of Orissa. For the first time in history the various illegalities, medieval practices prevailing in the Orissa States were officially exposed and given a wide publicity. It was so potent that Lord Linlithgow admitted that the reports which were sent previously describing the States as something different from the province were definitely wrong and misleading. H.K. Mahtab, Chairman of the Committee, regretted that before any concrete step could be taken regarding the status of the Feudatory States of Orissa, on the basis of the Report, the Second World War broke out impeding all efforts to streamline the administration in the Feudatory States in the interest of the people.

During the Second World War, the British Government strengthened the grip of the Feudatory Chiefs on their subjects by providing them with the Defence of India Rules. The leaders of the *Prajamandal* were arbitrarily arrested under the pretext of internal security. Consequently, the People's agitation in the States was adjourned till 1942 when the Quit India Movement galvanised the country into vigorous action.

It is true that the Peoples' movement in the Orissa States between 1931-40 could not make any significant achievements, yet its developments and *modus operandi* can neither be under-estimated nor ignored. Though it fought for its own cause with local leadership it could secure the sympathy and support of All-India States' Peoples' Conference as well as the National Congress and its leaders, especially Mahatma Gandhi. All the *Prajamandal* organisations were indoctrinated with the Gandhian principles of non-violence and *Satyagraha*.[339] The people in the States as in British India had undergone a complete change. There was a great political awakening in them and they were resolved to secure their legitimate rights, civil liberties and responsible Government. It is significant to note that agrarian problems were given top priority in the charter of demands because majority of the insurgents' were peasants[340] who were groaning under the obligation of innumer-able feudal levies and taxes.

The Ludhiana session of All-India States' Peoples' Con-ference under the Presidentship of Jawaharlal Nehru held on 15-16 February 1939 passed the following resolutions:[341]

> This Conference, while welcoming the great awakening among the people of the States all over India, strongly condemns the use of force by the Paramount Power in its attempt to support the Princes in resisting the legiti-mate aspirations by lending the use of Imperial troops and Agency Police. The obligation to protect the Rulers under the *Sanad* cannot be onesided and can never justify the cause of coercive methods to crush the legiti-mate and peaceful movements of the people of the States for the assertion of their birthright of responsible Government. While the Conference deeply regrets the death of Major Bazelgette at Ranpur, it condemns strong-ly the reign of terror that prevails at present in some of the States of Orissa, the atrocities that are reported to have followed, the British troops in Dhenkanal, the exodus of more than 25,000 of Talcher, the practical desertion of Ranpur by the people, deliberate breach of agreement arrived at between the Ruler and the ruled in Nilgiri and the banning of *Prajamandal* in Hindol, in the

> wake of its much advertised reforms, all in Orissa, where the Princes were bound to rule under the terms of the *Sanads* with the advice of the Political Officer, serves to show that the Paramount Power has decided to resort to the use of force in putting down the mass awakening in the States where the peoole are living under the most wretched conditions of life.

Not only that, the Congress Ministry in the Province headed by Biswanath Das rendered its moral and material support to the cause of the States' people. Even though, according to the provisions of the Government of India Act of 1935, neither the provincial Government nor the Central Legislature had any right to interfere with or to speak about the affairs of the Feudatory States. Biswanath Das appealed to the Rulers of the Orissa States on 12 November 1938 to restore peace and tranquillity in their domains by making compromises with their subjects.[342] The unprecedented exodus of the people to the Province, shelter of a number of *Prajamandal* leaders and the opening of the *Prajamandal* offices in the Province made the position of the Orissa Government most embarrassing and delicate. When the Rulers demanded the extradition of the *Prajamandal* leaders so that they might be given exemplary punishments they had the support of the British Government. But the Congress leaders viewed it otherwise. Nehru made it clear at Ludhiana, that it was a demand which

> no Congress Ministry could agree to without loosing honour and betraying our comrades in the States and being false to our principles.[343]

Accordingly, the Congress Ministry of Orissa rejected the extradition warrants.[344]

Lord Linlithgow visited Orissa in the first week of August 1939 and the affairs of the Feudatory States drew his immediate attention.[345] He discussed the problem with the Congress Ministry. Speaking at a banquet at Cuttack club, he made special reference to relations between the people of Orissa and those of the neighbouring Eastern States. He admitted that there was as such no geographical boundary between the two

parts and the people were closely interlinked in various ways.[346] Such views coming from no less an authority than the Viceroy of India had an impact on the nationalist activities of the people in Orissa when they forged close contact and drew up a common line of action to fight for the attainment of freedom. The political distinction between the British administered districts and the Feudatory States was cast to the wind.

UPRISINGS IN THE STATES, 1941-47

In the later half of 1939 when the Rajas were about to concede the demands of the *Prajamandal*, the World War II broke out and the Congress Ministry was out of Office. During the War, the British authorities strengthened the grip of the Rajas to preserve their Empire. The Defence of India Rules and the Princes Protection Act were strictly implemented leading to the arrest of *Prajamandal* leaders. The *Prajamandal* organisations in the States were declared unlawful. Public meetings, presentations of petitions were banned, civil liberties were altogether absent in the States. Some of the leaders, in order to escape arrest, went underground and formed temporary *Prajamandal* organisations and trained the youth sincerely.[347]

The Quit India Movement launched by Mahatma Gandhi on 8 August 1942 had a tremendous impact throughout the country ushering in a fresh wave of nationalist upsurage. The people in the States of Orissa were also caught in the nationalist frenzy and with unprecedented zeal and enthusiasm plunged into the mainstream of the nation's struggle for freedom. The call of Gandhi worked like magic and the political situation in the States again became chaotic.

Talcher

Almost all the *Prajamandal* leaders[348] of the State including Pabitra Mohan Pradhan, the President, were arrested either by extradition warrants or Defence of India Rules. Seeing the helpless condition of the *Prajamandal* the youth stepped forward to take up the organisation and formed a temporary *Prajamandal* in the month of January 1941 with following office-bearers:[349]

President—Kalindi Pradhan.
Joint Secretaries—Kritibas Rath and Bichhanda Pradhan.
Treasurer—Kasinath Samantrary.

The absconded leaders like Gouri Shankar Pradhan, Bankanidhi Bhakta Ballabh and Chandra Sekhar Das (Jhalu Das) acted as advisors in disguise. This *Prajamandal* carried on a number of constructive Congress programmes and imparted political teaching to the people.

The Political consciousness injected into the minds of the people of Talcher by the *Prajamandal* workers as well as by the Congress workers during the great exodus of 1938 once again exploded into an open revolt in response to the call of Gandhi in 1942. The agitation took such a vigorous turn that Talcher became one of the five places in India where people were machine-gunned from aeroplane.[350] The cause of this unprecedented rising was the *Durbar's* mal-administration characterised by brutal measures of oppressions. The leaders were arrested under false charges and imprisoned.

The immediate cause that inflamed the people was the rumour that Pabitra Mohan Pradhan, the President of the State *Prajamandal* had been murdered inside the jail. But actually Pabitra Mohan Pradhan had befooled the *Durbar* by tactfully escaping from the jail on 31 August 1942[351] and going underground. The *Durbar* declared a reward of ten thousand rupees for his arrest. Some people thought that the Raja might have killed him inside the jail and was trying to deceive the mass by offering cash prize for the arrest. Apprehending danger to the life of other leaders in the jail thousands of people assembled before the Palace on 1 September 1942 in order to break-open the jail. But the *Prajamandal* checked the mob and convened an emergency meeting at Paniola in Angul on 2 September 1942[352] where it was resolved to have an open confrontation with the *Durbar* on 6 September 1942. Bichhanda Pradhan was to organise this demonstration. At the meeting it was further resolved to establish a Government of the farmers and labourers (*Chasi-Mulia Sarkar*). Pabitra Mohan Pradhan was guiding the *Prajamandal* from underground.

The people disobeyed all State orders and organised '*Chasi-Mulia Raj*', *i.e.*, a parallel Government in each village, Block,

Circle, Pragana and Sub-Division.[353] They boycotted the Government officials and ignored their orders. Practically the entire State of Talcher excepting the Headquarters town came under the control of *Chasi-Mulia Raj* of the *Prajamandal.*[354] Thereupon, the Raja sought the assistance of the British Government which was very promptly made available.

As per the Resolution of the Paniola Camp on 6 September 1942 the militia (People's army) marched from each village armed with all sorts of crude weapons like country guns, swords, shields, spikes, hammers, *lathis*, spears, arrows and bows, axes, hatchets, kerosene oil, etc.[355] About eight thousand people gathered at the weekly market place in a large mango grove.

The British Government had provided the services of both the Infantry and the Air Force to help maintain the *status quo* in the State. These forces were mobilised into action; bullets and tear-gas shells were fired at the villagers from aeroplanes to terrorise them.[356] The infantry marched into every nook and cranny of the State to fight off the advancing mob, but in vain. Chanting various inspiring slogans to the accompaniment of the blowing of conch and trumpets the insurgents faced the well-armed military forces of the Government.[357] They raised barricades wherever possible and demanded on 7 September immediate transfer of power from the Raja making the latter a constitutional head and the expeditious establishment of peoples' Government.

The militia attempted to break through the enemy line but cannons from right, left, back, front and above wounded and killed them mercilessly. The people were crudely equipped and necessarily harmless, for if it came to a show-down they were not much, yet they were machine-gunned from the aeroplanes and were fired upon by the infantry from behind smoke walls, created by the aeroplanes.[358] It resulted in on the spot death of four and wounds of hundreds of diverse dimensions. Being blinded with tear-gases and choked with smoke, the mass militia baffled and panic-stricken dispersed in diverse directions. There was no limit to the barbarity of the British soldiers; they chased the panic-stricken masses for miles altogether by dropping bombs from aeroplanes on them and firing from behind.[359]

In the confrontation there were hundreds of casualties on account of frequent firing by the army as well as large scale

arrests. Eye witness accounts revealed that truck loads of dead bodies were carried away for disposal and about 300 persons were arrested. Several villages were pillaged; molestation of women was very common.[360] About one hundred persons sustained severe injuries and after a mock trial all those who were arrested were given rigorous prison terms varying from six months to three years. The Ruler did not permit any open inquiry into the allegations.[361] To a question of Pandit H.N. Kunjru at the Council of States the Government spokesman affirmed that at five places including Talcher, the insurgents had been machine-gunned during the Quit India Movement of 1942.[362]

The Quit India Movement, thus, became another occasion to reinforce the authority of the Raja by the requisition of Paramount troops on the pretext of political instability in the State. The parallel Government set up by the people ceased to function on account of the oppressions of the *Durbar*. The leaders and workers of the *Prajamandal* like Pabitra Mohan Pradhan, Gobardhan Sahu, Gouri Shankar Pradhan, Bichhanda Pradhan, Jhalu Das, Maheswar Pradhan and Firingi Pradhan who had gone underground did not surrender themselves, but continued guerilla activities till the end of May 1943. A few leaders like Pabitra Mohan Pradhan, Gobardhan Sahu joined the suicidal squad of the Indian National Army of Subhash Chandra Bose and did not surrender till 1947.

In 1945, Mahatma Gandhi advised the leaders of the Quit India Movement who had gone underground to surrender. Though some of the *Prajamandal* workers surrendered, Pabitra Mohan Pradhan did not do so till his warrant was cancelled on 29 August 1947.[363]

The final phase of the struggle for securing the freedom of the people was started in Talcher in 1947 during the post-Independence period. Pabitra Mohan Pradhan organised about 20,000 volunteers demanding the merger of the State in the province.[364] Such a vigorous public demonstration created panic in the circle of the Raja. Since the British people were no longer there to help him he sought the help of Mahatma Gandhi who advised him to merge his State in the province.[365] With the merger of Talcher in Orissa in December 1947 the State was restored peace and stability.

Dhenkanal

As in Talcher so also in Dhenkanal, the Quit India resolution of 1942 was responded by a violent armed agitation. Most of the *Prajamandal* leaders, including Maheswar Subahu Singh, Krutibas Pradhan, Narottam Das, Brajakishore Dhal, Purna Chandra Mahapatra were arrested and detained under Defence of India Rules and extradition warrants.[366] Public meetings and processions were prohibited. But Baisnab Charan Pattnaik managed to escape the arrest and went underground to organise and train the workers of Palasuni Bisa and Parjang, the two strongholds of Dhenkanal *Prajamandal*.[367] With an armed squad of 19 persons[368] very crudely equipped he made a surprise raid on the Madhi Sub-Division (Kamakshya Nagar).[369] His men arrested the police and Magistrate and forcibly took possession of the treasury.[370] Subsequently, they established popular rule in the town which continued for 15 days being conducted from underground.[371] The Raja being panic-stricken, requisitioned the Paramount Military force. On the arrival of the forces Pattnaik and his men took recourse to guerilla warfare and there were some skirmishes between them and the police. On one such occasion Pattnaik was seriously injured and was in need of urgent treatment. He rushed to Cuttack for it but to his misfortune he discovered that he could not seek admission in any hospital without giving himself away. There was an extradition warrant in his name awaiting his arrival. Under the circumstances he could not but make for Calcutta straight. There was absolutely no security risk then he could get the necessary medical treatment. On recovery he joined the Communist Party.[372] The other members of his group were arrested and were served with rigorous sentences. Even three of them were awarded death sentence[373] which was subsequently commuted to life imprisonment on apeal.[374]

The Raja again got an opportunity to unleash a reign of terror in the State backed by the Paramount Police force. Villages and houses were indiscriminately raided, properties looted; people were beaten at the offer of the slightest revilence and their womenfolk dishonoured.[375] Punitive tax was imposed and forcibly collected which amounted to more than twenty-five thousand rupees. All these earned a bad record for the Raja which led to the withdrawal of his power. The State administra-

tion was taken over on 17 January 1944 and was managed by the Political Department through Agents.[376]

With the appointment of Government administrators the *Prajamandal* leaders were gradually released. After the release of the leaders,[377] *Prajamandal* was once again reorganised under the Presidentship of Brajakishore Dhal and the Secretaryship of Krutibas Pradhan.[378]

In 1947, after the departure of S.K. Srivastav and T. Satyanarayan, Rai Bahadur B. Sarkar was appointed the Chief Minister of Dhenkanal and the Raja was restored his powers.[379] During the post-Independence period once again *Prajamandal* movement gained momentum under the twin leadership of Brajakishore Dhal and Maheswar Subahu Singh who organised a militia of about 20,000, demanding the establishment of a responsible Government.[380] To arrest the growth of disturbances the State authorities took all necessary precautions. Rai Bahadur B. Sarkar in his letter No. 77 CM/47 dated 22 September 1947 to Krishna Rao, Director, Union Secretariat, Orissa and Chhatisgarh States' Raigarh, wrote "to supply 1500 ball cartidges for 410 muskets and 1530 buckshot cartidges to face the breach of peace in the State".[381] But before any agitation could be launched Sardar Patel arrived in Orissa on 13 December 1947 to effect the merger of States, when Dhenkanal was merged into the Province of Orissa along with other States of Orissa.

Sonepur

During the Quit India Movement, seeing the violent movements in the States of Talcher and Dhenkanal, the State authorities apprehended danger and arrested all the *Prajamandal* leaders under the Defence of India Rules; and detained them in jail as security prisoners. In the absence of popular leaders the people in the State observed the Quit India Movement silently.[382]

However, in 1947, a vigorous agitation raised its head under the leadership of Muralidhar Mishra, the President of Binika Primary *Prajamandal* from 30 January 1947.[383] The other organisers of the movement were Fakir Mohan Sethi, Anadi Meher and Govinda Meher. The Raja immediately arrested the leaders to suppress the agitation but his move backfired, far from scaring the people into inaction it inflamed their passion. Hundreds of people assembled before the *Durbar* and demanded the release

of their leaders.[384] The attitude of the insurgents became so menacing that the *Durbar* released all the arrested leaders. The agitation, however, was carried on for three months during which the State authorities hosted a Royal Military force of 300 to forestall any disturbance. The *Prajamandal* activities cooled down slowly, and the State was merged into Orissa in December 1947.[385]

Patna

The tide of *Prajamandal* movements in the neighbouring States of Orissa during the 1930s had repercussions in the State of Patna. Though the *Prajamandal* was not formed in the State during the decade between 1931-40, political awakening had dawned in the minds of the people. On 29 September 1938, a large crowd under the leadership of Satyananda Mishra, Jogeswar Kumar and Dibakar Bohidar assembled before the Palace and presented a Charter of Demand before the Ruler conveying mainly, their agrarian grievances. But it was not followed up by any agitation. It was nothing but only a sporadic action on the spur of the moment.[386]

During the Quit India movement also there were no political activities in the State. In 1945, an organisation designated "*Krushak Dal*" (Peasants' Party) was set up on 9 September 1945,[387] The objective of the organisation was to secure civil and other legitimate rights of the people. It was registered on 2 January 1946 under the provision of Patna State Registration of Societies Act and was affiliated to the All-India States' Peoples' Conference.[388] It was the only political organisation in the State representing the views of the people. As the organisation was affiliated to the All-India States' Peoples' Conference it may be considered as a modified form of the *Prajamandal* organisation.[389] The office-bearers of the *Krushak Dal* were Kapileswar Prasad Nanda, President; Yudhisthir Mishra, Vice-President and Niranjan Purohit, Secretary-*cum*-Treasurer. Other members of the organisation were Ram Chandra Sahu, Bhargabi Guru, Chintamani Rath, Kunjabehari Meher, Nimai Charan Panigrahi, Dibakara Bohidar, Purna Chandra Patra and Sankarsan Panigrahi. Branch Offices were established at Titilagarh, Kantabanji, Tushra, Saintala, Patnagarh, Loisinga, Banomunda and Salebhata in the beginning of January 1946.[390]

In the meanwhile, towards the later part of 1945, the Raja having realised the craving of the people to have a responsible Government, announced the establishment of a Legislative Assembly just to appease them. Election was conducted for the Assembly and *Krushak Dal*, as the only political party, fought the election and secured 10 out of 14 seats. The Assembly was inaugurated by the Raja on 16 October 1945.[391] But there were as many nominated members as there were elected ones in the Assembly. It caused difficulty in getting resolutions passed by a majority of votes by the elected members and to carry out the plans of the people. Despite this drawback, certain good resolutions like those dealing with the restoration of civil rights to the people, and the abolition of the system of registration of societies were passed, though these were never implemented.[392]

But with the advance of time the people were growing politically more conscious and preparing to secure their civil rights. One of the restrictions which hit the people economically was the customs barriers. There were several restrictions on export of goods from the State to outside. The people were compelled to sell their goods within the State at a price much lower than they could get outside the State. The people of Agalpur took a decision to break the customs barriers and sought the help of *Krushak Dal* in mounting an agitation. In response to this call the President of the *Krushak Dal* went there in December 1946 accompanied by Krushna Chandra Mishra and Bishnu Charan Sahu to lead the people in their agitation. But before an agitation could be mounted for the purpose a compromise was reached between the people and the State authorities according to which certain goods were allowed to be exported.[393]

In the beginning of 1947, the *Durbar* sponsored a political organisation under the name "*Prajamandal*".[391] But this *Prajamandal* of Patna was not like its namesake of other States. It was an organisation mainly representing the *Durbar* to check the growing popularity of the *Krushak Dal* which was the real peoples' organisation in the State. In 1947, polifical situation took a new turn when the Durbar announced to set up a popular Government by taking one minister from each of the political parties. The new Cabinet was constituted in accordance with the decision of the *Durbar* taking one minister from each of the two parties and another two from among the Raja's men.[395]

Kapileswar Prasad Nanda joined the Cabinet, as the representative of *Krushak Dal*, but resigned on 18 June 1947 as he found that the working of the coalition ministry was not upto his expectations as far as the needs of the people were concerned.[396]

Thereupon, the Raja announced on 24 October 1947 the establishment of a popular Government. The *Krushak Dal* resolved on 29 October to boycott the announcement. But before any action could be taken in this direction the merger of the State was effected in December 1947. Mahtab viewed that the Raja very tactfully forestalled all initiatives of the people for the reform of the political system by the timely announcement of changes in administration to appease the discontent of the people for some time.[397]

Kalahandi

While *Prajamandal* organisations were constituted in most of the States of Orissa with specific objectives, no such political institution was set up in Kalahandi till the end of 1940. Instead, an institution designated "*Karmi Sangha*" was set up in Kasipur with the aim of uplifting the *Harijans* and *Adivasis*.[398] '*Karmi Sangha*' was sponsored by the Kasipur *Rajamata* Sambhupriya Devi. It may be noted here that Kasipur was a *Zamindari* under Kalahandi *Durbar* but was ultimately, annexed by the latter in 1869, in spite of the unwillingness of its people.[399] The annexation of their home land was resented by the people of Kasipur estate, who were on the look out for an opportunity to rise against the *Durbar*. The *Prajamandal* agitation in other States provided that opportunity. Therefore, an orgaisation, apparently non-political in the eyes of the Raja, was formed. The workers while carrying on social services among the *Harijans* and *Adivasis* gave wide publicity to the political events in the States of Nilgiri, Dhenkanal, Talcher, etc., to arouse the political consciousness of the people. But these secret and underground political activities of the organisation were concealed from the *Durbar*.[400] *Karmi Sangha* neither carried on any political agitation nor presented any charter of demands to the *Durbar*.

In May 1964, Apadu Sahu, a leading member of *Karmi Sangha* contacted Sarangadhar Das, Secretary of Orissa States' Peoples' Conference, for mounting a political agitation in the

State and was instructed to do so. Consequently *'Adivasi Sevamandal'* was set up in June 1946 with the aim of carrying on political propaganda to prepare the people for an organised agitation. Thus, as in the State of Patna, the people of Kalahandi also wanted to achieve the *Prajamandal* objectives in the name of *Adivasi Sevamandal* in order to escape the suspicions and wrath of the *Durbar*.[401]

The *Adivasi Sevamandal* was inaugurated under the patronage of *Rajamata* Sambhupriya Devi. The Executive Committee consisted of 11 members of whom Apadu Sahu was President, Binayak Patra, the Secretary, and Rama Chandra Goud, the Treasurer.[402] Other members of the Executive Committee were Bhagabati Senapati, Goura Shankar Singh, Jogendra Dandasena, Bhabani Naik, Jhaja Naik, Hal Dhar Goud, Jharu Jhadia and Padmalochan Patra. The *Sevamandal* became very popular and it could enrol 1565 members. This growing popularity of the organisation attracted the attention of the *Durbar* which in April 1947 declared it unlawful and arrested the leaders of the Executive Committee. Under the circumstances the headquarters of the *Sevamandal* was shifted to Raigarh, a small township, in the District of Koraput.[403] Subsequently, there was no agitation in the State till the merger of the State in December 1947. Thus, in the State there was not any vigorous agitation excepting the propaganda campaign of the *Karmi Sangha*.

Gangpur

The firing of 1939 had terrorised and demoralised the people of Gangpur thoroughly. For at least another six years they could not think of launching any agitation whatsoever. It was only in 1946, that *Prajamandal* was organised under the leadership of Nirod Goswami (Patel Babu), Natabara Pandey, Sundarmani Patel, Harihar Patel, Natabar Naik and Dhananjoy Mohanty.[404] The *Prajamandal* enlisted volunteers and undertook to make Political propaganda among the people. Several meetings were organised in the villages and people were made aware of their legitimate rights. A Charter of Demands was drawn up and presented to the Raja.[405] In response the Raja promised to take the steps for the formation of a responsible Government. But before the Raja could start the work in earnest to establish

responsible Government in the State, Sardar Patel visited Orissa and effected the merger of the State into the Province in December 1947.

Baud

Prajamandal in the State of Baud was formed in 1945 under the leadership of Damodara Danduasi to fight against the oppressive rule of the Raja.[406] This late formation of *Prajamandal* had its underlying difficulties and not that the *Durbar* was enlightened because of which Political organisations were formed late. In 1930-31, the situation in the State of Baud was frequently highlighted in the Oriya dailies, particularly in the *Deshakatha* for its autocratic administration and steep land rent fixed in 1930 Settlement. The mass resented the increase in land rent. About 27 Khonds went to the Political Agent in the hope of getting something done about it, but nothing happened. On their return they were cruely beaten and put in jails.[407] On the same issue of increased assessment another band of workers consisting of the following members: Rai-Shib Kumar Deo, a near relation of the Raja, Prahallad Bisi, a High School teacher, Premasankar Pattnaik, a Congress social worker, Krupasindhu Meher, Md. Azim Khan, Chakradhar Mishra, Basu Karana, Gouri Shankar Raj Guru, Sashi Sekhar Mishra and Chintamani Tripathy formed a secret association with a view to launching an agitation against the extremely oppressive and tyrannical rule of the Raja, his officials and against the increase in land revenue following the Settlement of 1930. When all these were published in the newspapers[408] and sporadic resentment was noticed, the Raja came to know of the formation of a secret society and its members. Thereupon, the Raja inflicted repressive measures on the organisers of the Society. Rai-Shib Kumar was confined to his own quarters after his properties were confiscated and the following members: Prahallad Bisi, Premasankar Pattnaik, Chintamani Tripathy, Balram Mishra and Sashi Sekhar Mishra were physically assaulted and mal-treated being held guilty on a number of false charges.[409]

Against a background of such repressive measures the association could not thrive. This marked the end of an early attempt to start popular agitation in Baud against the mis-rule of the Ruler.

With the formation of *Prajamandal* in 1945 the political outlook of the people took a new turn. Sarangadhar Das was the guiding spirit of the *Prajamandal*. On the occasion he was invited to address a meeting of the *Prajamandal* at Baud but the State police made a *lathi* charge on the assembly mercilessly causing injuries to many.[410] There were sporadic agitations against unpaid and conscript labour and the forest laws. Some of the men even went to the extent of cutting the trees of the reserve forests in defiance of orders of the Raja. The lead was taken by Damarudhar Meher. They were all imprisoned. Besides these, there were a few instances of students' agitation against the increase in school fees, education cess and for the employment of qualified teachers and provisions of hostel accommodation. But when six of the students were rusticated by the *Durbar* the agitation slowly petered out. Thus, the *Prajamandal* as well as the students' agitation, backed by the *Prajamandal*, failed to achieve any tangible success in Baud on account of the repressive measures adopted by the State.

Mayurbhanj

Mayurbhanj was second in area among all the States in the Eastern States Agency, and largest in population which was about 10 lakhs in the Census of 1940-41. The bulk of the population were aborigines most of whom were addicted to drinking. Of the entire population only 2 per cent were literate even though the State had two High English Schools.[411] It was the premier State of Orissa parading an enlightened administration. There was a High Court adorned with great persons, such as the retired British Indian High Court and Sessions Judges.[412] There was also a Political Adviser with the usual paraphernalia of office and other establishments outside the State drawing a fat salary.[413] The administration with a big Secretariat and a large number of motor cars and aeroplanes was most top heavy and it did not at all go well with the abject economic condition of the people. It showed gross disproportion and thoughtlessness on the part of the administration. The whole system was under the personal superintendence of the Maharaja and all the officers were removable from service at his sweet will. The total income of the State was in the neighbourhood of 29 lakhs which was entirely wasted on the administrative machinery and the privy purses of the

Ruler and his family members,[414] whereas almost more than 90 per cent of the population did not know either the joys of a hearty meal or decent clothing.[415]

The State officials in Mayurbhanj were the agents of centralised *Durbar* administration. The system of collection of land revenue was otherwise known as '*Sardari* System'. It was a very autocratic and oppressive system. In the revenue administration the *Sardars*, *Tahasildars* and *Lakhrajdars* (Tribal *Sardars*) were the intermediaries between the *Durbar* and the *Sarbarakars* (village headmen) who were getting commissions in proportion to the amount of rents and revenue collected by them.[416] The system was very faulty and autocratic as the *Sardars* were vested with wide powers of local administration in the '*Praganas*'. They were considered a mean band of exploiters by all and sundry who hardly bothered to take into account the quality and yield of the land in question and the amount one spent on its cultivation but kept themselves satisfied with the collection of rents in an enhanced rate by means mostly foul to get their fair commission. It is worthy to mention here that most of the *Sardars* were imported from Cuttack,[417] particularly from the '*Karana* caste' with a malafide intention.[418] But the *Durbar* took the plea that they were brought from Cuttack because of the non-availability of educated personnel in Mayurbhanj.[419] Their exploitation was so severe that the very word "*Sardar*" struck terror in the hearts of the people.[420] Medieval feudal practices like *bethi*, *beggari*, *magan* and *rasad* had been abolished in the State as early as 1893 by a royal decree dated 25 July 1893;[421] but it was only in pen and paper. Forced and free labour and compulsory contributions were fairly frequent, particularly in Panchpir Sub-Division located far away from the State Capital.[422]

Prasanna Kumar Das, General Secretary, Mayurbhanj *Prajamandal* made the following press statements:[423]

> Instances of forced labour and illegal exactions and realisation of exorbitant rate of interest are to be met even at this advanced stage of the world and under the very nose of the Government. The people being ignorant and timid, this state of theirs was taken advantage of and for a paltry amount of loan, they had to pay double, triple

and four-fold; and at last have had in many cases to part with their ancestral land with tears in their eyes.

All these were done particularly by the *Sardars*[424] keeping the Ruler in the dark. The people were not only exploited economically but also had their civil liberties curtailed. Uptill the great political awakening in the Orissa States in 1938 there was a particular circular in force, *i.e.*, No. 3 dated 27 April 1925 suspending the basic rights of freedom of speech, association and public meetings. This circular was challenged by Bansidhar Behera[425] when in October 1938 he convened a public meeting at Simila.[426] Subsequently, he organised a number of public meetings at Joshipur, Gadisahi and Raruan criticising the administration of the *Durbar* and demanding the cancellation of the prohibitory circular. In the wake of the upheaval in the neighbouring State of Nilgiri the said circular was withdrawn on 25 November 1938,[427] and the Mayurbhanj *Praja Sabha* order of 1938 came into being, declaring the establishment of five *Praja Sabhas*, one for each of the four Sub-Divisions namely, Sadar, Bamanghaty, Kaptipada, Panchpir and the fifth one for the town of Baripada with a view to keeping the people in closer touch with the administration.[428] These representative bodies were required to project the local opinion in matters concerning the well-being of the people. According to the provisions of the *Praja Sabha* order of 1938 two-third of the members of the *Praja Sabha* were to be elected on the basis of adult franchise and the rest one-third being nominated by Raja. The first election was held in May 1939 and the Sabha sat in Session in June 1939.[429]

Though these *Praja Sabhas* were created with a view to bringing the people into closer touch with the administration and to focusing attention upon local problems and views, but, in reality, they failed to discharge their responsibilities.[430] Prasanna Kumar Das would, therefore, remark:[431]

> These *Praja Sabhas* are so many shame institutions quite independent of each other and with no central body of a co-ordinating character. . . . They have got no real power in them to carry and binding effect of their decisions on the executive heads of the State.

However, the people experienced the system of direct democracy in choosing their representatives to the *Praja Sabha.* On the day of election the candidates were to stand in a row and the electors were asked to queue behind their supported candidates. Election results were determined by counting the heads. This was based upon adult male franchise.[432]

The Mayurbhanj *Prajamandal* was formed in 1940 with a view to securing greater political involvement for the people in their attempt to achieve a responsible Government. But the enlightened and politically conscious people of Mayurbhanj had already organised '*Pragana Samiti*' for the purpose. Sarat Chandra Das, the distinguished leader of Mayurbhanj, was associated with the political activities in Balasore District in his capacity as the Vice-President of Balasore Congress Committee for five years from 1920-1925.[433] He was also associated with the Utkal Union Movement for a long time. He was a lawyer at first, but he gave up his profession in 1939 and assumed the leadership of political agitation in Mayurbhanj.[434] For his dedication and sincere social service he was affectionately called as "Sarat Gandhi".[435]

The home of Sarat Chandra Das at Ambajora near Betnati became the nucleus of Political activities upto 1947. It was here that the decision to form *Pragana Samitis* in the villages was taken on 26 March 1939.[436] School and College students, teachers and all enlightened people enlisted themselves as its members.[437] Subsequently, *Pragana Samitis* sprang up in every village because of their constructive programmes like repair of roads, prohibition campaign, agricultural exhibition, opening of schools and encouragement of cotton cultivation, etc., which made them popular among the villages for their village oriented programmes.[438] Sarat Chandra Das kept up steady political propaganda and initiated agitation slowly. The people evinced keen interest in the new movement of rural reconstruction and came forward in large numbers to enlist themselves as members of the *Pragana Samiti.* Gradually they learnt to work in close co-operation for the economic welfare of the villagers. Village economic funds were created to save the villagers from the clutches of the money-lenders and to help them in times of distress.[439]

Side by side with the constructive programmes, political teaching was imparted to the villagers. They were made

conscious of the despotic administration and were called upon to be united in challenging the feudal authority and demanding their legitimate civil and political rights. But the principle of proceeding slowly and steadily was followed and no agitation challenging the *Durbar* was launched.[440]

Jawaharlal Nehru was highly impressed of the good works done by Das and his *Pragana Samiti* in the rural areas, giving a better orientation to the agrarian Society. He wished Das all success.[441] Since the tribals of Mayurbhanj were backward and were exploited by unscrupulous tradesmen, money-lenders as well as the wine sellers, Das's programme of rural reconstruction among them was really commendable.[442]

The State Government watched with interest the growing popularity of the *Pragana Samiti* and the changes in the attitude of the people, and also marked how the *Praja Sabha*, its own organisation, was losing its hold on the people. On 18 December 1940, a meeting of the workers of the *Pragana Samiti* was convened at Ambajora and it was designated 'Mayurbhanj State *Prajamandal*' with Sarat Chandra Das as President and Goura Pradhan as its Secretary.[443] This was given a wide publicity. The *Durbar* reacted against Das's growing popularity by initiating malicious propaganda in a bid to impair his image as a public leader. Das was compared with Hitler and was painted as a typical crook and an utterly selfish person.[444]

Further, to counteract the growing popularity of the *Prajamandal*, the *Durbar* promptly sponsored an institution called the State *Prajamangal*[445] consisting of persons who upheld the cause of the *Durbar*. They included *Sarbarakars*, *Sardars*, *Tahasildars* and the State officials. It was headed by Harish Chandra Das.[446] Mahanta Balram Das of Jashipur was the leading organiser of the *Prajamangal*. The local State officials and *Sardars* pressurised the people to enlist themselves as members of the *Prajamangal*. They stopped giving loans to the people supporting the *Prajamandal* and oppressed them in various ways. The idea was to mislead the people in the political field so that the common people would be in a confusion to decide which of the two organisations was good for them.[447] The *Prajamangal* workers created disturbances in the public meetings and constructive programmes undertaken by the *Prajamandal*.[448] Prasanna Kumar Das, General Secretary of Mayurbhanj *Prajamandal*

issued a press statement on 17 December 1941,[449] alleging the *Prajamangal* workers that in last Independence Celebration Day when the *Prajamandal* workers were engaged in repairing a road leading to the Harijan *basti*[450] in Baripada, the *Prajamangal* workers accompanied by the police came and created disturbances and did not allow the '*Seva* Work' to be completed. In the same afternoon when the *Prajamandal* was addressing a meeting of about three thousand people, the *Prajamangal* workers rushed to the meeting and snatched away the Congress National Flag of the *Prajamandal*. This resulted in a tussel between both the parties, when the police intervened by making a discriminatory *lathi* charge on the *Prajamandal* workers leaving the *Prajamangal* members untouched who were putting on green badges on their caps.[451]

To mislead the people the *Prajamangal* was later on styled as "Mayurbhanj National Congress" and the State flag was called "Mayurbhanj National Flag" and all *Prajamangal* meetings were called "Mayurbhanj Congress Meetings".[452] A very wide network of espionage system was set up under a retired British Indian Police Superintendent as the Inspector General of Police to watch the activities of the *Prajamandal* workers.[453] False cases were lodged against the *Prajamandal* workers in the lower courts leading to their detention and subsequent imprisonment. But unfortunately because of the independent character of the Mayurbhanj High Court which was free from the influence of the Executive authorities, most of the accused persons were acquitted on appeal.[454]

Undaunted by these developments the *Prajamandal* workers were working with a spirit of challenge to preserve their popularity and public support. Goura Pradhan, the Secretary of the *Prajamandal* composed revolutionary songs like 'Mother's call' (*Maar Daaka*) and, to arouse the womenfolk in particular, he composed 'Wake up—Ladies' (*Jaga Jaga Nari Yati*) which had their desired effect. A large number of women came forward and held meetings at Naktra, Pratimadevipur, Kalhpal and Khandeul and many other places criticising the administration of the *Durbar* and demanding responsible Governments.[455] The *Prajamandal* opened a '*Sevadal*' training camp[456] at Ambajora where volunteers were trained to help people during flood, famine and other natural calamities. Village level constructive

programmes were vigorously executed for the poor people in the remote parts of the State. Prasanna Kumar Das reported on 17 December 1941 that the *Prajamandal* had undertaken the following activities:[157]

1. Literacy Movement—119 Day and Night Schools had been opened providing education facilities to 2908 students, including the adults.[158]
2. Cotton Cultivation—140 acres of land had been brought under cotton cultivation by sowing 13 *maunds* and 23 *seers* of cotton seeds. Workers were deputed to Balasore *ashram* for training in spinning, and spinning centres were opened in the State on their return. Clothes were woven by the local weavers.[159]
3. Disposal of cases by the village *Panchayat*—Both civil and criminal cases numbering about 396 were amicably disposed of besides hundreds of petty cases.[160]
4. Prohibition—The consumption of *Handia* (home-made alcohol from boiled rice) and other alcoholic drinks was falling steadily. In the State, 76 per cent of the population were addicted to drinking who were mostly aborigines. In this connection it is worthy of note that *Santal, Bhumij, Kol, Kurmi* and *Mahanta* (the aborigines) who were the members of the *Prajamandal*, worked incessantly to enforce prohibition. They highlighted the social evils of drinking and its economic strain on a poor man's purse.[161]
5. Unity and Co-operation—When the pro-*Durbar* elements like money-lenders, *Sardars*, stopped giving loans to the *Prajamandal* workers the poor peasants were badly affected for not getting paddy loans. This infused a spirit of co-operation and unity in the workers and the well-to-do peasants. They extended free labour and help to the needy. To ensure future protection to the poor peasantry in this regard from the clutches of the rural creditors, 'grain-golas' on a co-operative basis were started in several villages.[162] Moreover, to ensure smooth cultivation and good

harvest the *Prajamandal* undertook the construction of eight irrigation projects.[463]

This way, the *Prajamandal* became very popular throughout the State of Mayurbhanj and the people developed great respect for its leaders. Having secured the whole-hearted backing of the people, the *Prajamandal* demanded responsible and representative Government as the only remedy for the existing maladies. To give wide publicity to these demands public meetings and demonstrations were held which were attended by thousands of people.[464]

Thus, the political strategy of patronising the *Prajamangal* by the State authority, as a parallel organisation for giving a death blow to the *Prajamandal* did not work. Instead, the reaction that set in on account of the harassment of the leaders made the *Prajamandal* more powerful and popular. Even the *Durbar's* recourse to arbitrary and oppressive acts like[465] Defence of India Rules, Defence of Mayurbhanj Order, 1940, Defence of Mayurbhanj Rules, 1941 and Public Security Order, 1941 could not succeed in destorying the *Prajamandal.*

The famous Quit India agitation of 1942 in the neighbouring British Districts and Orissa States like Dhenkanal and Talcher created a considerable stir among the people of Mayurbhanj. Public meetings were held at different places,[466] excise shops were picketed and '*hats*' (markets) were boycotted by the workers for quite sometimes.[467] Unlike the other States of Orissa, the *Durbar* of Mayurbhanj did not interfere much in those activities of the *Prajamandal.*[468] Moreover, the agitation was never vigorous nor violent. However, the *Prajamandal* never diverted its attention from the constructive programmes, thereby it retained the love and respect of the common people.[469] The third session of the *Prajamandal* was held at Madhunanda of Manitri Pragana in 1944.[470] An agricultural exhibition was held along with it.

When the demand for responsible Government by the *Prajamandal* became more vigorous day by day, the Maharaja formed the Mayurbhanj *Kendriya Parishad* in the year 1945 on the occasion of his 44th Birthday Ceremony, *i.e.*, 23 April, 1945.[471] The *Kendriya Parishad* (Central Legislature) consisted of 27 members including the President among whom not less than 15

were nominated by the Maharaja. He elected men of special interest in different branches of knowledge. The *Parishad* was to be summoned by the Maharaja at least once a year. The Maharaja was nominating a President and a Deputy President. Decision was taken on the basis of majority votes with the President enjoying a casting vote.[172] Freedom of speech was granted in the *Parishad* but at the same time members were not allowed to give publicity to any of the reports, papers, notes and proceedings of the *Parishad.*[173] The resolutions of the *Parishad* could not be enacted without the assent of the Maharaja. No bill or amendment was to be introduced or moved in the *Parishad* relating to (*i*) the Maharaja and his family, (*ii*) the Maharaja with the Paramount Power or any British Indian Government or any State and its Ruler, (*iii*) matters governing treaties, *Sanads*, conventions or agreements in force.[174]

Twelve persons[175] were elected to the *Kendriya Parishad* in its first election that was completed in August 1945 and 14 were nominated by the Maharaja.[176] In the *Parishad* the elected members were on par with the nominated members. But, though the elected and nominated members of the *Parishad* had equal powers and status, yet, in parctice, the nominated members were excercising greater authority, they being Raja's men. The People's representatives could not achieve their goal of responsible Government with the little power that was given to them in the *Parishad.* Thus, the establishment of the *Kendriya Parishad* could not satisfy the *Prajamandal* for very little power was vested in the elected members. However, they remained firm in their demand for responsible Government and continued their Political activities organising meetings in different places as well as criticising the administration. Most conspicuous among the meetings were one held at *Tota Hat* on 17 March 1946, and another at Sukruli *Hat* which drew large crowds.[177] The meetings were followed by violence and arrest.[178] In February 1947, there was a *paik* rising under the leadership of Baikuntha Nath Sadual, a member of the Executive Committee of Mayurbhanj *Prajamandal*, protesting against the orders of the State administration. The order confiscated *paik jagir* lands when a *paik* died leaving minor children on the ground that they were no more needed for wars.[179] The President of the *Paik Samilani*, Baikuntha Nath Sadual was arrested and detained in Baripada

jail as security prisoner. The arrest of the President created resentment among the people in general and the *paiks* in particular. On 30 March 1947, a huge procession consisting of thousands of people, among whom were hundreds of females paraded the main streets of Baripada and at the end of the parade a meeting was held in which the arbitrary actions of the State authorities in detaining the Persident of the *Paik Samilani* were condemned.[480]

Then came the creation of Orissa and Chhatisgarh States Peoples' Regional Council with Sarangadhar Das as its Chairman and Madan Mohan Pradhan as the Secretary.[481] Ten representatives of Mayurbhanj *Prajamandal* became its members. Three out of 15 members of the executive committee belonged to the Mayurbhanj *Prajamandal.* Prasanna Kumar Das was elected as one of the Joint Secretaries.[482] There also the representatives of Mayurbhanj *Prajamandal* denounced the State administration in Mayurbhanj, the constitution of the *Kendirya Parishad* as a body of royal nominees and the members of *Praja Parishad.*

Praja Parished was another organisation of the Raja which succeeded the *Prajamangal* when the latter ceased to function. It was intended to be a parallel organisation to the *Prajamandal* and to counteract its activities. This organisation like the *Prajamangal* was also sponsored by the *Durbar* with Lokanath Pattnaik as its President.[483] He demanded before the All-India States' Peoples' Conference that it was the real representative body of Mayurbhanj having the support of the aborigines. At the same time Lokanath Pattnaik alleged that *Prajamandal* was a destructive organisation having no public support and exploiting the good name of the Congress.[484]

In reaction to the clandestine activities of the *Durbar* the *Prajamandal* leaders boycotted the *Kendriya Parishad* and withdrew themselves from it. Their vacancies were filled in by the members of the *Praja Parishad.* The *Prajamandal* criticised these acts of the *Durbar* and demanded the establishment of a responsible Government on the basis of adult franchise. They presented their Charter of Demands on 30 June 1947.[485] The Maharaja being totally disgusted with the criticism against the *Kendriya Parishad* which was established with the intention of satisfying the people, dissolved it on 5 July 1947.[486] Thereupon, the Executive Committee of the *Prajamandal* met at Ambajora

on 30 July 1947 and formed an action committee with Sarat Chandra Das, Harihar Mohanty, Ananta Rath and Prasanna Kumar Das as its members to pressurise the Maharaja to accept the Charter of Demands presented on 30 June 1947 and establish a responsible Government.[487]

The *Prajamandal* celebrated the Independence Day of India with an assembly of about seven thousand men, women and children. It resolved to launch *Satyagraha* until the fulfilment of the demands.[488] The *Praja Parishad* was boycotted on 18 August 1947 and about 500 *Satyagrahis* took part in picketing excise shops, courts, etc.[489] Even though the *Satyagraha* continued for twenty days the *Durbar* remained indifferent to the agitation. Thereupon, the leaders of the *Prajamandal* gave an ultimatum to the Maharaja that unless their demands were fulfilled by 16 September 1947, they would launch a vigorous mass agitation. Maharaja Pratap Chandra Bhanj Deo, being a liberal and moderate ruler, unlike the Rulers of Dhenkanal and Talcher, wanted a peaceful settlement with his people and accordingly sent his Chief Revenue Officer, Radha Gobinda Das to negotiate with the *Prajamandal* leaders.[490] In the negotiation it was decided that *Prajamandal* would submit a list of members for the *Praja Sabha* as well as the defunct *Kendriya Parishad* to function as an interim Government until the members to *Praja Sabha* and *Kendriya Parishad* were duly elected.[491] The Maharaja would act like a constitutional monarch. The Maharaja agreed to the proposal of establishing a responsible Government in the State as an independent unit in the manner of the Indian Union.[492]

Accordingly, responsible Government was set up in Mayurbhanj and the Maharaja was given the respect of the first citizen in the State.[493] On 9 December 1947,[494] Sarat Chandra Das, B. Mahapatra and M. Naik were chosen by the Maharaja to constitute a three-member cabinet with Sarat Chandra Das as the Chief. The Ministers were allotted the following portfolios:[495]

1. Sarat Chandra Das—Premier, Home, Finance Audit, Planning and Reconstruction.
2. B. Mahapatra —Revenue, Law, Health and Local Government.

3. M. Naik —Development, Education, Supply, Transport, Public Works, Commerce and Labour.

Thus, the *Prajamandal* achieved its long cherished goal of forming a responsible Government in the State. Later on the State *Prajamandal* was declared as the Mayurbanj State Congress.[496] The popular ministry functioned with different Committees like Budget Committee, Steering Committee and Constituent Committee.[497] 15 December was observed as the Self-Governing Day and on the occasion minister M. Naik took the salute from the Police on parade at Baripada.

The establishment of responsible Government in the State was given wide publicity. It was also intimated to the Government of India. Both Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru[498] and President Dr. Rajendra Prasad[499] sent their good wishes to Sarat Chandra Das, the Premier.[500]

When Sardar Patel visited Orissa on 13 December 1947 and successfully persuaded the ruling Chiefs of the Feudatory States of Orissa to sign the Instrument of Accession, the Maharaja explained that he had already granted responsible Government in his State and that a popular ministry was functioning headed by the *Prajamandal* leader Sarat Chandra Das. Hence, he would not make may commitment without consulting his Ministers. Therefore, Mayurbhanj was excluded from the merger and was given a separate status.

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2. Letter of Raja Pratap Chandra Bhanja Deo of Mayurbhanj, dated 9 May, 1946. to Maharawl of Dungarpur.
   H. K. Mahtab, *Beginning of the End*, (Cuttack, 1972), pp. 1-2.
3. *Ibid.*
4. Interview : Hare Krushna Mahtab, Pabitra Mohan Pradhan, Har Mohan Pattnaik, Baishnab Charan Pattnaik.
5. R.O.S.E.C., p. 8.
6. *Ibid.*
7. *Ibid.*
8. P.M. Pradhan, *op. cit.*, Part I, p. 42.

9. Interview: Naba Krushna Choudhury, Har Mohan Pattnaik, Pabitra Mohan Pradhan.
10. *Ibid.*
11. Supra.
12. S.C.C.W.O., Dhenkanal, (Cuttack, 1967), p. I.
13. *Ibid.*
    Interview: Naba Krushna Choudhury, Hare Krushna Mahtab, Surendra Nath Dwivedy.
14. S.C.C.W.O., Dhenkanal, p. II.
    H.K. Mahtab, (ed.), *History of Freedom Movement in Orissa*, Vol. III, (Cuttack, 1957), p. 94.
15. S.C.C.W.O., Sambalpur, Sundergarh, Kalahandi and Bolangir-Patna Districts, (Cuttack, 1969), p. IX.
    Interview: Dayananda Satpathy.
16. R.O.S.E.C., p. 6.
17. The Settlement was completed under the supervision of Sir Meeefer-son who was acting as the Manager of the State when it was under the Court of Wards. The Settlement was popularly known as Meefer Settlement.
18. R.O.S.E.C., p. 6.
19. *Ibid.*
    The Prajatantra, 23 March 1931 and 30 March 1931.
20. Interview: Dayananda Satpathy.
21. *The Prajatantra, loc. cit.*
    S.C.C.W.O., Sambalpur, Sundergarh, Kalahandi, and Bolangir-Patna Districts, *op. cit.*, p. X.
    Interview: Dayananda Satpathy.
22. H.K. Mahtab, (ed.), *op. cit*, Vol. III, pp. 96-98.
23. The Santals constituted the major part of the tribal population of Mayurbhanj.
24. *O.D.G., Mayurbhanj*, (Cuttack, 1967), p. 82.
25. *Ibid.*
26. *Memoranda on Indian States*, 1934, p. 85.
27. *O.D.G., Mayurbhanj*, p. 82.
    Reports on the Administration of Mayurbhanj, 1917-18, p. 60.
28. R.O.S.E.C., p. 7.
    H.K. Mahtab, (ed.); *op. cit*, Vol. III, p. 99.
29. *Ibid*, p. 134.
30. H.K. Mahtab, (ed.), *op. cit*, Vol. III, pp. 99-100.
31. Interview: Hare Krushna Mahtab, Shyam Sundar Das of Nilgiri.
32. H.K. Mahtab, (ed.), *loc. cit.*
    R.O.S.E.C., p. 7.
33. H.K. Mahtab, (ed.), op. cit, Vol. III, p. 95.
34. R.O.S.E.C., p. 7.
    A. Mishra, *Talcher Andolana*, (Cuttack, 1948) p. 3.
35. *Ibid.*
    Interview, P.M. Pradhan, (President of Talcher *Prajamadal*).

36. *Ibid.*
37. Interview. Naba Krushna Choudhury, Surendra Nath Dwivedy, Pabitra Mohan Pradhan.
38. P.M. Pradhan, *op. cit*, Part I, p. 51.
39. R.O.S.E.C., p. 103.
40. *Ibid.*
    Interview: Pabitra Mohan Pradhan.
41. R.O.S.E.C., p. 103.
42. *The Deshakatha*, 2 December 1930, gives a vivid picture on the enhancement of the rents and the atrocities of the *Dewan*.
43. *Ibid*, 11 May 1931.
44. Interview: Hare Krushna Mahtab, Naba Krushna Choudhury, Pabitra Mohan Pradhan, Har Mohan Pattnaik.
45. A. N. Sundari Sanou, *Indian States Register and Directory*, (Madras, 1929), pp. 301-16.
46. *Ibid.*
47. *Ibid.*
48. *Ibid.*
49. Indian National Congress, Resolutions 1929, (Allahabad), p. 59.
50. M.K. Gandhi, *Indian States' Problem* (Ahmedabad, 1941), p. 64.
51. *Ibid*, p. 65.
52. *Ibid*, p. 104.
53. *The Times of India*, (Bombay), 25 January 1939.
54. Interview: Naba Krushna Choudhury and Surendra Nath Dwivedy, the prominent Socialist leaders of the Province. They projected the States' problem in their paper "*Krushak*" whose editor was Dashrathi Panigrahi, another Socialist leader of the Province.
55. *The Deshakatha*, 4 May 1931.
56. *The Prajatantra*, 23 June 1931.
57. *The Samaj*, 26 March 1931.
58. *The Prajatantra*, 25 May 1931.
59. Interview: Hare Krushna Mahtab, Surendra Nath Dwivedy and Har Mohan Pattnaik.
60. *The Prajatantra*, 29 June 1931, Projected in details of the resolutions taken in the Session. It had altogether 9 resolutions.
61. *Ibid.*
62. Interview: Hare Krushna Mahtab, Har Mohan Pattnaik, Pabitra Mohan Pradhan.
63. Mahadev Desai, *The Story of Bardoli*, (Ahmedabad, 1929), p. 152.
64. *Supra*, p. 84.
65. Interview: Pabitra Mohan Pradhan who held that the *Gaontias* came forward to lead the movement because their *Gaontis* were confiscated, if failed to pay the revenue of their villages, thereby they were badly affected.
66. *Ibid.*
67. These were the States, there was no progress in education.
    Interview: Dayananda Satpathy.

68. Interview: Hare Krushna Mahtab, Naba Krushna Choudhury.
69. F.P.D., No. 376, P (Secret) 1931.
    Express letter from M.G. Hallet, officiating Chief Secretary to Government of Bihar and Orissa, to the Political Departments, Simla, dated 6 June 1931, Ref. No. 3541-C.
70. The authority about the statements of the newspapers have been attested by an interview with Hare Krushna Mahtab, Naba Krushna Choudhury and Pabitra Mohan Pradhan.
71. Interview: Pabitra Mohan Pradhan, President, Talcher *Prajamandal*, Har Mohan Pattnaik, President, Dhenkanal *Prajamandal*, Prasanna Kumar Das, Secretary, Mayurbhanj *Prajamandal*.
72. L.M. Pattnaik, *Resurrected Orissa*, p. 329.
73. Jawaharlal Nehru Memorial Museum Library, (Hereinafter referred to as J.N.M.M.L.) A.I.S.P.C., File No. 127, pp. 365-68.
    Interview: Surendra Nath Dwivedy who opined that the Orissa States' Peoples' Conference of 1931 was nothing but a paper organisation without having any clear conception.
74. *Indian Annual Register*, Vol. I, 1937, p. 356.
75. *Samaj*, 15 August 1934.
76. J.N.M.M.L., A.I.S.P.C., File No. 127, p. 368.
77. *Ibid.*, p. 365.
78. Interview: Hare Krushna Mahtab, Naba Krushna Choudhury, Pabitra Mohan Pradhan.
79. H.K. Mahtab, (ed.), *op. cit.*, Vol. V. p. 121.
80. Interview: Hare Krushna Mahtab, Naba Krushna Choudhury, Prasanna Kumar Das and Pabitra Mohan Pradhan.
81. *Ibid.*
    The Statesman, 13 August 1938.
82. H.K. Mahtab, (ed.), *op. cit.*, Vol. III, p. 100.
83. Interview: Hare Krushna Mahtab.
84. S.U.A., English Newspaper Collections, File No. 1, p. 10. Report of the Assistant *Dewan*, Nilgiri State.
85. *Ibid.*
86. *Ibid.*
87. *Ibid.*
88. *Ibid.*
89. *Ibid*, p. 11.
90. *Ibid.*
    Sarangadhar Das was regularly contributing articles to the paper exposing the atrocities of the Chiefs in the States; and the article was captioned as "*Landa Dehuri*".
    The *Durbar* alleged *Krushak* publishing false and exaggerated accounts which excited disaffection, contempt and hatred towards the administration of the State. The *Durbar* alleged that the *Yuvak Sakha Samiti* was exacting money from the poor villagers by giving them false assurance that they would establish responsible Govern-

ment in the State where the subjects would have absolute liberty and control over the State budget.

91. S.U.A., English Newspaper Collections, File No. 1, p. 8.
92. *Ibid.*
93. *Ibid*, p. 9.
94. J.N.M.M.L., A.I.S.P.C., File No. 127, p. 333.
95. S.U.A., English Newspaper Collections, File No. 1, p. 8.
96. *Ibid*, p. 13.
    Report of the Assistant *Dewan*, Nilgiri.
97. S.U.A., English Newspaper Collections, File No. 1, pp. 9-13.
98. *Ibid*, p. 8, dated 13 August 1938.
99. *Ibid.*, p. 8.
    Interview: Hare Krushna Mahtab.
100. *Ibid.*, p. 13.
    Report of the Assistant *Dewan*, Nilgiri.
101. *Ibid.*
102. H.K. Mahtab, *Sadhanara Pathe* (autobiography in Oriya), (Cuttack, 1972), p. 186.
103. S.U.A., English Newspaper Collections, File No. 1, p. 9.
104. *Ibid.*
105. *Ibid.*
106. H.K. Mahtab, *Sadhanara Pathe*, *op. cit.*, pp. 251-55.
107. All the demands were not fulfilled. The major demands were left for the consideration of the Resident, Eastern States; Infra, p. 102.
108. H.K. Mahtab, *loc. cit.*
109. *The Statesman*, 31 August 1938.
110. J.N.M.M.L., A.I.S.P.C., File No. 127, p. 93.
111. S.U.A., English Newspaper Collections, File No. 1, p. 51.
112. Maharaja of Patna's confidential note on the activities of the Orissa States' Peoples' Conference, p. 1.
    S.U.A., English Newspaper Collections, File No. 1. p. 43.
113. Here Orissa means the *Mughalbandi.*
114. R.O.S.E.C., p. 57.
    Compilation of Dhenkanal Itihas Committee, *Dhenkanal Swadhinata Andolanra Samkhipta Itihas* pp. 3-7.
115. Interview: Baisnab Charan Pattnaik, according to him declaration of monopoly on *pan* (betel leaf) became the immediate cause of the peoples' movement in Dhenkanal.
116. Brajakishore Dhal, *op. cit.*, p. 83.
117. J.N.M.M.L., A.I.S.P.C., File No. 127, p. 283.
118. *Ibid.*
    S.U.A., English Newspaper Collections, File No. 1, p. 53.
119. *Ibid.*
    Interview: Har Mohan Pattnaik and Baisnab Charan Pattnaik.
120. Extraordinary Dhenkanal State Gazette, 29 August 1938.
121. S.U.A., *loc. cit.*

122. J.N.M.M.L., A.I.S.P.C., File No. 127, p. 283.
S.U.A., English Newspaper Collections, File No. 1, p. 53.
123. *Ibid.*
124. *Ibid.*
125. Interview: Har Mohan Pattnaik and Baisnab Charan Pattnaik.
126. S.U.A., *loc. cit.*
127. *Ibid.*
128. Interview, Baisnab Charan Pattnaik.
129. S.U.A., English Newspaper Collections, File No. 1, p. 54.
130. *Ibid.*
131. *Ibid.*
J.N.M.M.L., A.I.S.P.C., File No. 127, p. 289.
O.D.G., Dhenkanal, op. cit., p. 69.
Interview: Har Mohan Pattnaik and Baisnab Charan Pattnaik.
132. *Ibid.*
133. J.N.M.M.L., A.I.S.P.C., File No. 127, p. 289.
S.U.A., English Newspaper Collections, File No. 1, p. 54.
135. *Ibid.*
135. *Ibid.*
136. *Ibid*; Also interview with Malati Choudhury. The wounded eight were (i) Kantha Prusti of Sogarpasi, (ii) Lokei Sahu of Dengabonai, (iii) Mohan Sahu of Mandaba Sahi, (iv) Adhikari Das of Chaulia Khamar, (v) Nabin Chandra Swain of Nizgarh, (vi) Pachhimira Naik of Parikheda Chaulia, (vii) Pranabandhu Panda of Sarion and, (viii) Kanhu Naik.
137. J.N.M.M.L., A.I.S.P.C., File No. 127, p. 289.
138. *Ibid.*
139. Interview: Hare Krushna Mahtab, Naba Krushna Choudhury, Malati Choudhury and Har Mohan Pattnaik.
140. J.N.M.M.L., A.I.S.P.C., File No. 127, p. 263.
141. S.U.A., English Newspaper Collections, File No. 1, p. 54.
142. King's Own Scottish Borderer; the troops of the Paramount Power.
143. S.U.A., English Newspaper Collections, File No. 1, p. 54.
144. *Ibid.*
145. *Ibid.*
Interview: Naba Krushna Choudhury, Hare Krushna Mahtab and Pabitra Mohan Pradhan.
146. Extraordinary Dhenkanal State Gazette, 20 September 1938.
S.U.A., English Newspaper Collections, File No. 1, p. 54.
147. *The Statesman*, 23 September 1938.
148. Interview: Har Mohan Pattnaik.
Villages were Parjang, Palausuni, Kualo, etc.
149. J.N.M.M.L., A.I.S,P.C., File No. 127, pp. 239 and 255.
150. S.U.A., English Newspaper Collections, File No. 1, p. 55.
151. *Ibid.*, Braja Kishore Dhal, *op. cit.*, p. 90.
Interview: Naba Krushna Choudhury, Pabitra Mohan Pradhan.
152. *Ibid.*

153. S.U.A., *op. cit.*, pp. 77-79.
J.N.M.M.L., A.I.S.P.C., File No. 127, p. 265.
154. *Ibid.*
But the *O.D.G. Dhenkanal*, p. 70, has maintained that about twenty police raided the village, which contradicts the statement of Sarangadhar Das issued to the press on 13 October 1938.
155. J.N.M.M.L., A.I.S.P.C., File No. 127, p. 265.
156. *Ibid.*
Press statement issued by Sarangadhar Das on 13 October 1938 was as follows:
The crime of the arrested persons was that in November they had taken the loyalty tickets of the *Durbar* but early in October they enrolled themselves as *Prajamandal* workers surrendering the loyalty tickets, the translation of which was as follows:
No. . . . . dt. 193
. . . . village . . . . has petitioned expressing his loyalty to the *Durbar* and explaining that he was compelled to join the movement out of fear. He has not been able to stop the movement out of fear of bearing and social boycott.

He is, therefore, pardoned and accepted as a loyal subject.

By Order,
Private Secretary, Dhenkanal

157. *Ibid.*, loc.cit.
Interview: Har Mohn Pattnaik.
158. J.N.M.M.L., A.I.S.P.C., File No. 127, p. 267.
Baji Rout's undaunted heroism and fearlessness against the ruthless police made him a martyr in the history of the *Prajamandal* movement of Dhenkanal. He emerged as the hero of several literary works which narrated the tragic saga of patriotism and sacrifice in a futile bid to resist naked tyranny.
Interview: Pabitra Mohan Pradhan, Har Mohan Pattnaik, Baisnab Charan Pattnaik.
O.D.G. Dhenkanal, pp. 70 and 80, has maintained that the firing resulted in the death of Baji Rout and eight others.
159. S.U.A., English Newspaper Collections, File No. 1, p. 78.
The Publicity Officer reported that the ring leaders of *Prajamandal* gave seditious speeches in Bhuban and excited the people to take to violence. Form 12 to 16 September the mob revolted violently assaulting the Circle Inspector and other *Thana* Officers, Tahasildars and forest staff mercilessly. On 19 August, the officer-in-charge of Bhuban Police Station was assaulted. Then on 7 October 1,000 people threatened the officer-in-charge of Bhuban to leave the station before nine next morning failing which he will be massacred and police station will be burnt. Thereupon, the Sub-Divisional Magistrate was deputed with a contingent of 20 armed police and arrested eight accused persons at Bhuban on 10 October. The people

armed with crude weapons attacked the police station. When the Magistrate failed to control the situation resorted to firing for self-defence.

160. *Ibid.*, p. 79.
Sarangadhar Das challenged the statement of the Publicity Officer as follows:
Not as a representative of the peoples of the States but as a Public man of Orissa I challenge the Publicity Officer of the Dhenkanal State to agree to an impartial judicial inquiry by a gentleman of the standing of a High Court Judge of any of the Provincial High Courts of India before whom both the parties will lay all their cards on the table. And I make this assertion that if a single one of the statements contained in the Press Note under reference is proved true, I shall immolate myself from public life.
161. S.U.A., English Newspaper Collections, File No. 1, p. 77.
Interview: Naba Krushna Choudhury, Har Mohan Pattnaik and Baisnab Charan Pattnaik.
162. *Ibid*, p. 81.
163. *Ibid.*
164. *Ibid*, p. 89.
Amrit Bazar Patrika, 6 November 1938.
165. *The Statesman*, 3 November 1938.
166. But practically the declared concessions were not enforced, rather the State continued its repressive measures.
Interview: Har Mohan Pattnaik and Baisnab Charan Pattnaik.
As the forest and the forest goods were monopolised by the State, the right of killing wild animals was only with the Raja and his officials.
167. *The Statesman*, 24 November 1938.
168. S.U.A., English Newspaper Collections, File No. 1, p. 94.
169. *Harijan*, 3 December 1938.
The Statesman, 4 December 1938.
R.O.S.E.C., p. 86.
170 *The Samaj*, 7 December 1938.
S.U.A., English Newspaper Collections, File No. 1, p. 95.
Interview, Naba Krushna Choudhury and Surendra Nath Dwivedy.
O.D.G. Dhenkanal, p. 70.
171. *Ibid.*
172. *Ibid.*
173. Interview: Naba Krushna Choudhury.
S.U.A., English Newspaper Collections, File No. 1, p. 95.
174. *National Front*, 22 January 1939 and 29 January 1939.
175. *Hindustan Standard*, (Congress Special), 10 March 1939.
176. J.N.M.M.L., A.I.S.P.C., File No. 127, p. 91.
177. *Ibid.*
178. S.C.C.W.O., Dhenkanal, *op. cit.*, p. 19.
179. J.N.M.M.L., A.I.S.P.C., File No. 127, p. 283.

180. S.C.C.W.O., Dhenkanal *op. cit.*, p. XIV.
181. Ananta Mishra, *Talcher Andolana* (Oriya), (Cuttack, 1948), pp. 11-16.
182. *Ibid.*
183. *Ibid.*
Interview: Pabitra Mohan Pradhan.
184. *Ibid.*
185. R.O.S.E.C., pp. 102-03.
186. *Ibid.*
Interview: Pabitra Mohan Pradhan.
187. S.U.A., English Newspaper Collections, File No. 1, p. 107.
R.O.S.E.C., p. 104.
188. Interview: Pabitra Mohan Pradhan.
189. R.O.S.E.C., p. 102.
190. *Ibid.*
191. S.C.C.W.O., Dhenkanal, *op. cit.*, p. 19.
192. R.O.S.E.C., p. 111.
193. S.U.A., English Newspaper Collections, File No. 1, p. 102.
194. *Ibid.*, p. 104.
195. R.O.S.E.C., pp. 102 and 111.
Interview: Pabitra Mohan Pradhan.
196. *Ibid.*
Harijan, 20 May 1939.
197. R.O.S.E.C., p. 111.
198. *Ibid.*
S.C.C.W.O., Dhenkanal *op. cit.*, p. 19.
199. Compilation of Talcher *Prajamandal Itihas* Committee, Talcher *Prajamandalra Itihas*, (1950), pp. 24 and 25.
200. Interview: Hare Krushna Mahtab, Pabitra Mohan Pradhan.
201. S.U.A., English Newspaper Collections, File No. 1, p. 107.
O.D.G., Dhenkanal, p. 69, has maintained that the migrating number was 65,000 out of 85,000.
202. *Ibid.*
203. *Ibid.*
204. *Ibid.*, p. 110.
205. *Ibid.*
206. *Ibid.*
207. *The Amrit Bazar Patrika*, 10 December 1938.
208. *The Statesman*, 12 January 1939.
209. P.M. Pradhan, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 69-84.
S.C.C.W.O., Dhenkanal, p. XII.
210. *Ibid.*
211. Compilation of Talcher *Prajamandal Itihas* Committee, *op. cit.*, pp. 26-27.
212. *Ibid.*
213. S.U.A., English Newspaper Collections, File No. 1, p. 109.

214. *Ibid.*
215. H.K. Mahtab, (ed.), op. cit., Vol. V, p. 124.
216. S.U.A., English Newspaper Collections, File No. 1, p. 113.
Interview: Pabitra Mohan Pradhan.
217. *Harijan*, 28 January 1939.
218. *Ibid.*
219. R.O.S.E.C., p. 111.
220. *Harijan*, 4 February 1939.
221. Probably the number of refugees had increased by one thousand within a month.
222. P.M. Pradhan, *op. cit.*, Part I, p. 70.
Also interview with Mr. Pradhan.
223. *The Statesman*, 15 December 1938.
224. Interview: Pabitra Mohan Pradhan.
225. H.K. Mahtab, *Sadhanara Pathe*, *op. cit.*, pp. 190-94.
226. *Harijan*, 18 February 1939.
Biswanath Das, Prime Minister also snubbed the Publicity Officer, Dhenkanal State, for repudiating the statements on refugees in his Press note dated 18 March 1939.
227. *Harijan*, 20 May 1939.
228. *Ibid.*
229. S.U.A., English Newspaper Collections, File No. 1, p. 118.
230. *Harijan*, 20 May 1939.
231. S.U.A., English Newspaper Collections, File N. 1, pp. 118-19.
232. *Ibid.*
Harijan, 22 April 1939.
P.M. Pradhan, *op. cit.*, Part I, p. 74.
233. R.O.S.E.C., p. 113.
234. *Harijan*, *loc. cit.*
235. *Ibid.*, also interview with Hare Krushna Mahtab.
236. Compilation of Talcher *Prejamadal Itihas* Committee, *op. cit.*, p. 28.
237. *Harijan*, 20 May 1939.
238. S.U.A., English Newspaper Collections, File No. 1, p. 119.
239. *Harijan*, 22 April 1939.
240. *Ibid.*
241. *Ibid.*, 20 May 1939.
242. Extraordinary Talcher State Gazette, 1 May 1939.
S.U.A., English Newspaper Collections, File No. 1, p. 121.
243. Interview: Pabitra Mohan Pradhan.
244. S.U.A., English Newspaper Collections, File No. 1, p. 124.
The Statesman, 9 May 1939.
245. *Ibid.*
246. *Ibid.*
247. Compilation of Talcher *Prajamandal Itihas* Committee, *op. cit.*, p. 37.
248. S.U.A., English Newspaper Collections, File No. 1, p. 124.

249. *Harijan*, 20 May 1939.
S.U.A., English Newspaper Collections, File No. 1, p. 126.
The Statesman, 7 July 1939.
250. *Harijan*, 16 May 1939.
251. *The Statesman*, 30 May 1939,
S.U.A., English Newspaper Collections, File No. 1, p. 127.
252. P.M. Pradhan, *op. cit.*, Part I, p. 84.
253. Compilation of Talcher *Prajamandal Itihas* Committee, *op. cit.*, p. 37.
S.U.A., English Newspaper Collections, File No. 1, p. 128.
254. *Ibid.*
Interview: Pabitra Mohan Pradhan.
255. P.M. Pradhan, *op. cit.*, Part I, p. 84.
256. *Harijan*, 24 June 1939, flashed the statements of Mahatma Gandhi "I am advising Travancore Rajkot and to a certain extent Talcher, as I have been constantly guiding them. But even with regard to them I have been tendering my advice, which, it is for them to accept or reject".
257. S.U.A., English Newspaper Collections, File No. 2, p. 10.
Amrit Bazar Patrika, 3 June 1939.
258. S.U.A., English Newspaper Collections, 8 July 1939.
259. J.N.M.M.L., A.I.S.P.C., File No. 127, p. 131.
Interview: Pabitra Mohan Pradhan.
260. Compilation of Talcher *Prajamandal Itihas* Committee, *op. cit.*, p. 40.
261. P.M. Pradhan, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 134-36.
262. J.N.M.M.L., A.I.S.P.C., File No. 127, p. 95.
263. Compilation of Talcher *Prajamandal Itihas* Committee, *op. cit.*, pp. 43-45.
Interview: Pabitra Mohan Pradhan.
264. *Nabeen* (Oriya Weekly), 10 January 1939.
265. S.C.C.W.O., Cuttack and Puri Districts, (Cuttack, 1970), p. VII.
266. *Ibid.*
Nabeen, 10 January 1939.
M.N. Das, (ed.) *Side Lights on History and Culture of Orissa*, (Cuttack, 1977), p. 290.
267. *Nabeen*, *loc. cit.*
268. M.N. Das, (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 290.
269. *O.D.G. Dhenkanal*, *op. cit.*, p. 109.
The murder of Bazelgette was the culmination of the agitation in Ranpur and the unforeseen outcome of the hated feelings that ran high among the people of the State.
270. *Nabeen*, 10 January 1939.
M.N. Das, (ed.), *loc. cit.*
271. H.K. Mahtab, *Sadhanara Pathe*, *op. cit.*, pp. 194-200.
272. *Ibid.*
Nabeen, 10 January 1939.

Interview: Hare Krushna Mahtab.
273. Indian Annual Register, Vol. I, 1939, p. 442.
274. Interview: Hare Krushna Mahtab.
275. The two were Raghunath Mohanty and Dibakar Parida.
O.D.G. Dhenkanal, op. cit, p. 109.
276. H.K. Mahtab, *Sadhanara Pathe, op. cit.*, pp. 194-200.
Interview, Hare Krushna Mahtab.
277. Indian Annual Register, Vol. I, 1939, pp. 308-09.
278. *Ibid.*, p. 442.
279. J.N.M.M.L., A.I.S.P.C. File No. 127, p. 245.
280. H.K. Mahtab, (ed.), *op. cit.*, Vol. IV, (Cuttack, 1957), pp. 21-22.
281. S.C.C.W.O., Cuttack and Puri Districts, (Cuttack, 1970), p. VI.
282. J.N.M.M.L., A.I.S.P.C., File No. 127, p. 93.
283. *Ibid.*, p. 94.
284. R.N. Singh Samanta, *Khandapara Prajamandalara Sankhipta Itihas*, (Oriya), (Cuttack, 1950), pp. 41-43.
285. J.N.M.M.L., A.I.S.P.C., File No. 127, p. 97.
286. S.C.C.W.O., Sundargarh, p. I, maintains that *Prajamandal* was formed in 1938. But Sarangadhar Das, Secretary, Orissa States' Peoples' Conference gave the press statement on 27 April 1939 that there was no *Prajamandal* in the State but was a tribal organisation led by Nirmal Munda. *Prajamandal* was formed in 1946. (J.N.M.M.L., A.I.S.P.C., File No. 127, pp. 241-43).
287. *The Statesman*, 9 May 1939.
Out of the total population of 3,56,674 nearly 40 per cent were aborigines. It was the Lutheran Mundas, who were converts to Christianity, protested against the settlement under the leadership of Nirmal Munda.
288. *Amrit Bazar Patrika*, 1 and 2 May 1939.
The assessment was made on soil unit system which created a variable rate for different villages according to their productivity.
289. *The Statesman*, 9 May 1939.
290. J.N.M.M.L., A I.S.P.C., File No. 127, p. 24-143.
Amrit Bazar Partika, 2 May 1939.
291. *Ibid.*
292. H.K. Mahtab, (ed.), *op. cit.*, Vol. V, p. 128.
H.K. Mahtab, *Sadhanara Pathe, op. cit.*, p. 270.
R.O.S.E.C., pp. 151-55.
Amrit Bazar Patrika, 2 May 1939.
S.U.A., English Newspaper Collections, File No. 1, pp. 131-35.
The official version stated that the number of killed was 28, whereas Sarangadhar Das maintained it to be sixty-five, and S.C.C.W.O., Sundergarh, recorded it to be forty-two.
293. The work of inquiring into the matter was given to Sri Dayananda Satpathy, the Congressite leader of the District of Sambalpur, who submitted his report to H.K. Mahtab and the editor of the *Samaj*.
Interview: Sradhakar Supkar, Dayananda Satpathy.

294. *The Statesman*, 30 May 1939.
295. J.N.M.M.L., A.I.S.P.C., File No. 127, p. 257.
Press Statement of Sarangadhar Das issued on 18 November 1938. But S.C.C.W.O., Sundergarh in p. II maintains that it was formed in 1947. The statement of Sarangadhar Das seems to be more accurate.
296. J.N.M.M.L., A.I.S.P.C., File No. 127, p. 257.
297. S.C.C.W.O., Bolangir, *op. cit.*, p. V.
Brajakishore Dhal, *op. cit.*, p. 160.
Ram Chandra Satpathy, *Sonepur Rajanaitika Anodolanara Samkhipta Itihasa* (Oriya), (Cuttack, 1973), p. 4.
298. *Ibid.*
299. *Ibid.*
300. Ram Chandra Satpathy, *op. cit.* p. 20.
301. *Ibid.*, p. 21.
Thereupon the *Prajamandal* sent batches of volunteers to offer *Satyagarha* in front of the *Durbar*. As many as three groups were sent on 1st, 2nd and 4th April 1939 respectively. Every time the volunteers were arrested by the State police before they reached the *Durbar*.
302. S.C.C.W.O., Bolangir, *op. cit.*, p. V.
303. Interview: Hare Krushna Mahtab, Pabitra Mohan Pradhan, Naba Krushna Choudhury, Dayananda Satpathy.
304. J.N.M.M.L., A.I.S.P.C., File No. 127, p. 251.
305. *Ibid.*
306. *Ibid.*
307. R.O.S.E.C., p. 138. The *Prajamandal* was formed on 11 September 1938 in an open public meeting which was attended by about 15,000 people.
308. *Ibid.*, *Prajamandal* was banned on 8 October 1938.
309. J.N.M.M.L., A.I.S.P.C., File No. 127, p. 95.
310. *Ibid.*, p. 97.
311. *Ibid.*
312. Brajakishore Dhal, *op. cit.*, p. 162.
313. *The Statesman*, 20 November 1938.
314. *The Samaj*, 18 January 1939.
315. *Ibid.*
316. *Ibid.*
317. R.O.S.E.C. p. 60.
318. J.N.M.M.L., A.I.S.P.C., File No. 127, p. 365.
319. R.O.S.E.C., p. 1.
320. The places where the Committee took witnesses were all British Administered Areas neighbouring to the States.
321. R.O.S.E.C., p. 2.
322. *Ibid.*, p. 60.
323. *Ibid.*, p. 2.
J.N.M.M.L., A.I.S.P.C., File No. 127, p. 366.

324. R.O.S.E.C., p. 3.
325. *Ibid.*
326. *Ibid.*, p. 54.
327. *Ibid.*, pp. 54-57.
328. *Ibid.*, p. 58.
329. During 1937-39, the Government of Orissa undertook agrarian legislations like the Orissa Tenancy Act, Orissa Money-lenders Act. etc., which secured the rights of the peasants and rural agrarian economy from the grip of the *Zamindars* and rural bankers.
330. R.O.S.E.C., pp. 58-59.
331. *Ibid.*, p. 59.
332. Aul, Kujang and Kanika, were treated by the British as estates though they were called States during the Mughals and Marathas.
333. R.O.S.E.C., p. 59.
334. *Ibid.*, p. 60.
    The Samaj, 2 August 1939.
335. H.K. Mahtab, *Beginning of the End*, *op. cit.*, pp. 8-9.
336. H.K. Mahtab, (ed.), *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 480.
337. J.N.M.M.L., A.I.S.P.C., File No. 127, p. 107.
338. *Ibid.*
    Letter from Sarangadhar Das to Rengali Das Kapadia, 31 August 1939.
339. Interview: Prasanna Kumar Das, Naba Krushna Choudhury, Hare Krushna Mahtab, Pabitra Mohan Pradhan.
340. *Ibid.*
341. *The Statesman*, 17 February 1939.
    Indian Annual Register, Vol. I, 1939, p. 442.
342. *The Samaj*, 16 November 1938.
343. *The Statesman*, 17 February 1939.
344. *The Samaj*, 17 May 1939.
345. *Ibid.*, 2 August 1939.
346. *Ibid.*
347. Interview: Pabitra Mohan Pradhan, Har Mohan Pattnaik, Baisnab Charan Pattnaik, Dayananda Satpathy.
348. Maguni Chandra Pradhan, Madan Mohan Pradhan, Dashrathi Pani and many others.
349. Compilation of Talcher *Prajamandal Itihas* Committee, *op. cit.*, p. 43.
    Interview: Pabitra Mohan Pradhan.
350. P.M. Pradhan, *op. cit.*, pp. 140-41.
351. *Ibid.*, pp. 88 and 134.
352. Compilation of Talcher *Prajamandal Itihas* Committee, *op. cit.*, pp. 49-50.
353. P.M. Pradhan, *op. cit.*, pp. 134-36.
354. *O.D.G.*, *Dhenkanal*, *op. cit.*, p. 71.
355. *Ibid.*
    P.M. Pradhan, *op. cit.*, Part I, p. 134.

356. *Ibid.*, p. 127.
357. *Ibid.*, p. 134.
358. *Ibid.*, pp. 139 and 141.
Interview: Pabitra Mohan Pradhan, Naba Krushna Choudhury.
359. *Ibid.*
360. *Ibid.*
361. Interview: Naba Krushna Choudhury, Surendra Nath Dwivedy.
362. P.M. Pradhan, *op. cit.*, p. 141.
363. Interview: Pabitra Mohan Pradhan.
364. P.M. Pradhan, *op. cit.*, Part II, p. 9.
S.C.C.W.O., Dhenkanal, p. XIV.
365. *Ibid.*
366. J.N.M.M.L., A.I.S.P.C., File No. 206, p. 43.
Letter from Sarangadhar Das to Dr. K.B. Menon, Office Secretary, A.I.S.P.C., Bombay, dated 28 April, 1941.
367. Interview: Baisnab Charan Pattnaik.
368. *Ibid.*
369. H.K. Mahtab, (ed.), *op. cit.*, Vol. V., p. 13.
S.C.C.W.O., Dhenkanal, *op. cit.*, p. XVI.
370. *Ibid.*
Interview: Baisnab Charan Pattnaik, Har Mohan Pattnaik.
371. *Ibid*
S.C.C.W.O., Dhenkanal, *op. cit.*, p. XVI.
372. Interview: Baisnab Charan Pattnaik.
273. Judgment of the Court of Special Judge under Dhenkanal Special Criminal Court Order, 1942, dated 27 December 1942, p. 62;
"Each of the accused Musa Malik, Ananda Swain, Ankul Sahu shall be hanged by neck till he is dead".
374. Interview: Baisnab Charan Pattnaik.
375. Brajakishore Dhal, *op. cit.*, pp. 104-05.
Interview: Har Mohan Pattnaik, Baisnab Charan Pattnaik.
376. *Ibid.*
O.D.G. Dhenkanal, *op. cit.*, p. 58.
Certificate dated 12 July 1942 from Hon'ble Resident of Eastern States.
Owing to mal-administration in the State of Dhenkanal the Crown's Representative was compelled to restrict the Powers of the Ruler from the 17th January 1944. This restriction will continue until the lapse of Paramountcy on the 15th of August 1947. Accordingly the Crown Representative appointed from time to time, the following officers in the State:
(1) Rai Shib S.K. Srivastav, as Chief Minister for 3 years from 17 January 1944.
(2) Rai Shib T. Satyanarayan, as General Minister for 3 years from 17 January 1944.

(3) Rai Shib Rai Gopal Das as Special Officer from October 1944 to April 1945.

(4) Rai Bahadur O.K. Chatterjee, as Superintendent of Police from August 1941.

These officers served as agents of the Crown's Representative and performed their duties throughout under the instructions and guidance of the Political authorities who are soley responsible for all actions the aforesaid officers did in the discharge of their duties.

377. Extraordinary Dhenkanal State Gazette, 11 March 1946, released the *Prajamandal* leaders by cancelling the warrants including that of Baisnab Charan Pattnaik.
378. Brajakishore Dhal, *op. cit.*, pp. 107-108.
379. J.N.M.M.L. A.I.S.P.C., File No. 245, p. 157.
380. S.C.C.W.O., Dhenkanal, *op. cit.*, p. XVI.
381. J.N.M.M.L., H.K. Mahtab's Catalogue, File No. II, p. 157.
382. S.C.C.W.O. Sambalpur, Sundargarh, Kalahandi and Bolangir-Patna District, *op. cit.*, p. 5.

R.C. Satpathy, *Sonepur Rajanaitika Andolanara Samkhipata Itihasa* (Oriya), (Cuttack, 1973), p. 35.

The arrested *Prajamandal* leaders were Chatrubhuja Mishra, Ram Chandra Satpathy, Laxman Satpathy, Mohan Mishra, Dashrathi Prasad Das, Damodar Rath, Dhautaban Mallick, Satyananda Hota and Nandalal Sethi. They were all detained in jail for 2 years and were released on 15 August 1944.

383. S.C.C.W.O., Sambalpur, Sundargarh, Kalahandi and Bolangir-Patna District, *op. cit.*, p. V.
384. *Ibid.*
385. *Ibid.*
386. *Ibid.*, p. I.
387. *Ibid.*

Interview: Surendra Nath Dwivedy.

388. S.C.C.W.O., *loc. cit.*, p. II.
389. Interview: Surendra Nath Dwivedy and Naba Krushna Choudhury. In Patna, the *Prajamandal* was otherwise known as *Krushak Dal* being recognised by the Orissa States' Peoples' Conference.
390. S.C.C.W.O., Sambalpur, Sundargarh, Kalahandi and Bolangir-Patna District, *op. cit.*, p. II.
391. *Ibid.*
392. *Ibid.*, p. III.
393. *Ibid.*
394. *Ibid.*, p. IV.
395. *Ibid.*
396. *Ibid.*

Interview: Surendra Nath Dwivedy, Hare Krushna Mahtab.

397. Interview: Hare Krushna Mahtab.

S.C.C.W.O., Sambalpur, Sundargarh, Kalahandi and Bolangir-Patna Districts, *op. cit.*, p. IV.

398. *Ibid.*, p. 1.
399. *Ibid.*
400. *Ibid.*, p. 1.
401. *Ibid.*
402. *Ibid.*, p. II.
403. *Ibid.*
404. *Ibid.*, p. II.
Interview: Hare Krushna Mahtab, Naba Krushna Choudhury.
405. *Ibid.*
406. S.C.C.W.O., Koraput, Ganjam, and Baud-Phulbani Districts, (Cuttack, 1969), p. I.
407. R.O.S.E.C., p. 7.
Deshakatha, 11 May 1931.
408. *Ibid.*, 11 and 18 May 1931.
409. S.C.C.W.O., Koraput, Ganjam, and Baud-Phubani Districts, op. cit., p. 1.
410. *Ibid.*, p. II.
411. Compared to the other States in Orissa, Mayurbhanj was the first to leap forward in the field of education, both English and Vernacular. (L.E.B. Cobden Ramsay, *op. cit.*, p. 335).
412. J.N.M.M.L., A.I.S.P.C., File No. 128, p. 109.
413. *Ibid.*
414. *Ibid.*, pp. 109-11.
415. Interview: Prasanna Kumar Das, Secretary, Mayurbhanj *Prajamandal.* At present the M.L.A. of Orissa.
416. J.N.M.M.L., A.I.S.P.C., File No. 128, p. 113.
B. Mahanta, *Panchpir Prajamandal Andolana* (Oriya), 1979, p. 3.
Interview: Prasanna Kumar Das.
417. Interview: Maharaja Pradeep Chandra Bhanj Deo, the present Raja of Mayurbhanj.
418. *Ibid.*
Of course there were also tribal *Sardars* from Bhuyan and Gond castes.
419. Interview: Maharaja Pradeep Chandra Bhanj Deo.
420. *Desasevak*, p. 30.
421. Report on the Administration of Mayurbhanj, 1942-43, p. 6.
422. B. Mahanta, *op. cit.*, p. I.
423. J.N.M.M.L., A.I.S.P.C., File No. 128, p. 115.
424. Interview, Prasanna Kumar Das.
425. Bansidhar Behera was a man of village Dhadangir, P.S. Bangiri Posi.
426. Souvenir, *Orissa History Congress*, 1982, (Oriya Section), p. 1.
427. B. Mahanta, *op. cit.*, pp. 4-5.
J.N.M.M.L., A.I.S.P.C., File No. 128, p. 111.
428. Report on the Administration of Mayurbhanj, 1938-39, p. 5.
Souvenir, *O.H.C.*, 1982, p. 2.
429. Mayurbhanj State Gazette, 7 February 1942.

430. J.N.M.M.L., A.I.S.P.C., File No. 128, p. 111.
431. *Ibid.*
432. *Ibid.*
433. S.C.C.W.O., Mayurbhanj, Balasore and Keonjhar Districts, *op. cit.*, p. I.
434. *Ibid.*
Souvenir, *O.H.C.*, 1982, p. 2.
It was in a large public meeting at Dhanapana, Sarat Chandra Das committed to assume the leadership of Mayurbhanj agitation.
435. *Ibid.*
436. *Ibid.*
Deshasevak, p. 29.
437. *Ibid.*
438. Interview: Prasanna Kumar Das.
439. S.C.C.W.O., Mayurbhanj, Balasore and Keonjhar Districts, op. cit., p. II.
Souvenir, *O.H.*C., 1982, p. 2.
440. *Ibid.*
441. Letter from Jawaharlal Nehru to Sarat Chandra Das, dated 25 May 1940.
Souvenir, *O.H.C.*, 1982, p. 3.
442. *Ibid.*
443. *Deshasevak*, p. 30.
Interview: Prasanna Kumar Das.
444. J.N.M.M.L., A.I.S.P.C., File No. 128, p. 205.
445. *Deshasevak*, p. 30.
446. *Ibid.*
Haris Chandra Das was the younger brother of Ram Chandra Das, the Superintendent of Police, Mayurbhanj State who was a close friend of the Maharaja and his ardent supporter.
447. S.C.C.W.O., Mayurbhanj, Balasore and Keonjhar Districts, *op. cit.*, p. III.
448. Souvenir, *O.H.C.*, 1982, pp. 3-4.
449. J.N.M.M.L., A.I.S.P.C., File No. 128, pp. 43-45.
450. The locality inhabited by the Scheduled Caste people.
451. J.N.M.M.L., A.I.S.P.C., File No. 128, pp. 43-45.
452. *Ibid.*
453. *Ibid.*
B. Mahanta, *op. cit.*, pp. 11-12.
For example, one *Chowkidar* was posted for two months to watch the activities of Bhakta Bandhu Mahanta, teacher of Karanjia M.E. School and a *Prajamandal* worker.
454. Interview: Prasanna Kumar Das.
455. *Ibid.*
456. Souvenir, *O.H.C.*, 1982, p. 3.
457. J.N.M.M.L., A.I.S.P.C., File No. 128, pp. 53-60.
458. *Ibid.*, p. 53.

459. *Ibid.*
460. *Ibid.*, p. 55.
461. *Ibid.*, pp. 55-57.
462. *Ibid.*, p. 59.
463. *Ibid.*
464. *Ibid.*, p. 61.
S.C.C.W.O., Mayurbhanj, Balasore and Keonjhar Districts, *op. cit.*, p. 2.
465. J.N.M.M.L.. A.I.S.P.C., File No. 128, p. 47.
466. Places like Betnoti, Amarda, Khunta, Udala, etc.
Souvenir, *O.H.C.*, 1982, p. 4.
467. S.C.C.W.O., Mayurbhanj, Balasore and Keonjhar Districts, *op. cit.*, p. 6.
468. Interview: Prasanna Kumar Das.
469. Souvenir, O.H.C., 1982, p. 4.
On 26 January 1943, the *Prajamandal* started the irrigation project over the river Budhi near Naranaga in Baisinga P.S. The Dam was named "The Saratchandra Dam" after the name of Sarat Chandra Das, President of the *Prajamandal.*
470. S.C.C.W.O., Mayurbhanj, Balasore and Keonjhar Districts, *op. cit.*, p. 6.
471. Report on the Administration of Mayurbhanj, 1945-46, Introduction.
472. Mayurbhanj State Gazette, 23 April 1945.
473. *Ibib.*
474. *Ibid.*
475. The following twelve were elected.

Elected Members	*Constituencies*
1. Lal Mohan Pati	Baripada Praja Sabha
2. Umakanta Pattnaik	Sadar Praja Sabha
3. Sarat Chandra Das	Sadar Praja Sabha
4. Ratikanta Pattnaik	Sadar Praja Sabha
5. Chaturbhuja Maharana	Bamanghaty Praja Sabha
6. Jitendra Mahanta	Bamanghaty Praja Sabha
7. Fagu Chandra Majhi	Bamanghaty Praja Sabha
8. Biswanath Sahu	Panchpir Praja Sabha
9. Padmalochan Sahu	Paachpir Praja Sabha
10. Shiba Prasad Mohanty	Panchpir Praja Sabha
11. Gangadhar Jena	Panchpir Praja Sabha
12. Girish Chandra Roy	Panchpir Praja Sabha

476. Mayurbhanj State Bulletin, 22 July 1945.
Nominated members of Kendriya Parishad:
1. Lal Sheb Sarat Chandra Bhanj Deo.
2. Rajat Chandra Parakrama, *Sarabarakar* of Kaptipada.
3. D. Chand, Law Officer, TISCO, Jamshedpur.
4. Ayodhyanath Mahanta.
5. Major B. Panda, *Dewan* of Mayurbhanj.

6. T.S. Rajgopalan, Secretary of Mayurbhanj State.
7. K.R. Browankar, Secretary of the Law Department.
8. A. Das, Chief Forest Officer.
9. R.G. Das, Chief Revenue Officer.
10. R.C. Das, Superintendent of Police.
11. S.A. Kikkeri, Chief Engineer.
12. D.C.M. Sinha, Chief Medical Officer.
13. S.D. Bahuguna, Director of Education and Rural Reconstruction.
14. M. Naik, Director of Development and Industry.

477. B. Mahanta, *op. cit.*, p. 10.
478. *Ibid.*
479. S.C.C.W.O., Mayurbhanj, Balasore and Keonjhar Districts, *op. cit.*, p. 6.
J.N.M.M.L., A.I.S.P.C., File No. 112, p. 12.
480. *Ibid.*
481. H.K. Mahtab, (ed.), *op. cit.*, Vol. V., p. 131.
482. S.C.C.W.O., Mayurbhanj, Balasore and Keonjhar Districts, *op. cit.*, p. 7.
483. J.N.M.M.L., A.I.S.P.C., File No. 206, p. 43.
Interview: Prasanna Kumar Das.
484. J.N.M.M.L., A.I.S.P.C., File No. 112.
Whereas Sarangadhar Das in his letter to Dr. K.B. Menon, Office Secretary, A.I.S.P.C., Bombay, dated 28 April 1941, maintained that the *Prajamandal* was the political representative of the people of Mayurbhanj particularly of the aborigines.
(J.N.M.M.L., A.I.S.P.C., File No. 206, p. 43.
485. S.C.C.W.O., Mayurbhanj, Balosore and Keonjhar Districts, *op. cit*, p. 8.
486. Extraordinary Mayurbhanj State Gazette, 14 July 1947.
487. S.C.C.W.O., Mayurbhanj, Balasore and Keonjhar Districts, *op. cit.*, p. 8.
488. *Ibid.*
Souvenir, *O.H.C.*, 1982, p. 5.
489. *Ibid.*
490. S.C.C.W.O., Mayurbhanj, Balasore and Keonjhar Districts, *op. cit.*, p. 9.
Interview: Maharaja Pradeep Chandra Bhanj Deo, Prasanna Kumar Das.
491. *Ibid.*
492. Mayurbhanj State Gazette, 7 October 1947.
493. *Ibid*, 22 December 1947.
494. Extraordinary Mayurbhanj State Gazette, 10 December 1947.
495. Interview, Prasanna Kumar Das.
496. *O.D.G. Mayurbhanj*, p. 83.
497. Interview, *loc. cit.*

498.

Prime Minister's Secretariate, India
No. D/6/62, New Delhi,
January 7, 1948

Dear Prime Minister,

With reference to your letter No. 6657 dated 24 December 1947, I was asked by the Prime Minister to acknowledge the letter. He was happy as the Honourable Maharaja agreed to transfer his power and authority in the hands of the popular interim ministry, as well as with the unanimous election of the Secretary of the *Prajamandal* as the Prime Minister. He believes that the new Government will meet the long cherished desire of the common people and fetch prosperity and happiness.

Yours faithfully,
H.V. Iyengar,
Chief Private Secretary,
Prime Minister of India

499. To

Sri Sarat Chandra Das,
Baripada, Mayurbhanj.

Dear Friend,

I received your letter dated 24th December 1947. I am pleased to hear the establishment of all powerful democratic responsible interim Government in your dominion and also with the fact that a constitution has been proposed to be enacted by the end of April 1948. I am thankful to you and the members of the Constituent Assembly. I hope your letter will co-operate with the new system which we are going to constitute.

Yours faithfully,
Rajendra Prasad.

500. Mayurbhanj State Gazette, 22 January 1948.

5

Integration

THE INTEGRATION of States and the liquidation of princely order which was the third line of defence of British Imperialism was a tremendous task, confronting the post-Independence era. In Orissa, the twin process of integration and democratisation had their small beginning. The integration which became effective from 1 January 1948 involved an area of 28,457 square miles of territory.[1].

The institution of rulership had been a recognised feature of ancient Indian polity, but the British with the Princes, their treaty engagements, *sanads*, status and possessions consisting the Indian States System, established in a more vigorous manner and the British Paramountcy could be felt much more than any other power. The great revolt of 1857 demonstrated the value of the States System to the British Government as bulwark against the forces of nationalism. The role of the British Government in relation to the States and the State subjects was very mysterious. While the Paramount Power increasingly interfered in the internal affairs of the States and justified this interference on many grounds, such as the interests of the people, better administration of the States, peace and tranquillity and so on, and occasionally advised the Rulers to move with the times and introduce constitutional reforms in the States, the British Government consistently stuck to the treaty rights of the Rulers when the States' people demanded redress of their grievances. It was then invariably maintained that, the States being autonomous in their internal affairs, the British Government conld not interfere therein. But when peoples' struggle

threatened to be effective, then on the plea of Paramount Power's obligation to sustain the authority of the State, the British authorities rendered to the Rulers necessary help. The British did this solely for retaining their grip on Imperialism. Having assured of British support to their authority, the Princes, with some exceptions, felt no need to establish a welfare government and were invariably inclined to crush, with a heavy hand any political awakening amongst their people. Mahatma Gandhi aptly remarked that every Indian Prince was a Hitler in his own State.[2] Thus, in most of the States, the autocratic ways of the Princes compelled their people to lead a life of isolation, stagnation, ignorance and apathy under an outdated administrative structure.

These very circumstances, however, provided a climate for the development of the peoples' movement in the States. Since 1938, the people of the Orissa States were waging consistently a war of liberation from the clutches of the autocratic Rajas. In the wake of the popular uprisings the Rulers issued some minor concessions to appease the people but the *Prajamandals* which were demanding responsible Government could not be satisfied with that little concessions. The Indian Independence Act of 1947, released the States from all their obligations to the Crown as independent units creating a serious political vacuum between the Central Government and the States.[3]

The first effort to define and set up the constitutional relationship between the Indian States and British India was the Federal Scheme embodied in the Government of India Act, 1935.[4] The accession of the States to the Federation was to be effected by an Instrument of Accession.[5] Once it was executed by a Ruler and accepted by His Majesty, it permanently and irrevocably limited the Ruler's sovereignty to the extent to which he acceeded to the Federation. Of course, the accession of the States was voluntary, while the accession of the Provinces was compulsory and automatic. The Powers of the Crown with respect to Indian States were divided between two functionaries, the Governor-General and the Crown Representative. While functions of the Crown in relation to British India and the Federation were to be exercised by the Governor-General, its functions relating to the States, including that of Paramountcy, were to be exercised by the Crown Representative.[6] It was,

however, laid down that a person might hold simultaneously both the offices. The relations between the States and the Government of India were, hereafter, carried on through the circuitous route of the Crown Representative.[7] Till the lapse of Paramountcy, the Crown as represented by operating through the Political Department provided the nexus between the States and the Provincial Government.[8] The pivot of this arrangement was the Viceroy, who as Crown Representative, represented to the Indian States the suzerainty of British Crown, while at the same time he was, in relation to British India, the head of the Government as Governor-General.[9] This was forged to check the growing nationalism in India.[10]

However, the Federation Scheme embodied in the Act was highly illogical and just like "mixing of oil with water".[11] Rulers also outright refused to join the Federation apprehending the loss of their autonomy. With the lapse of Paramountcy, as provided by the Indian Independence Act of 1947, the Political Department would automatically close down. At the suggestion of Lord Mountbatten a new Department called the States Department was brought into being on 27 June 1947 to avoid any void that would be created by the ending of the Political Department.[12] The States Department was headed by Sardar Patel with V.P. Menon as the Secretary to conduct their relations with the States in matters of common concern.

The partition of India had given a violent blow to the political, economic and geographical integrity of India and threatened the country with chaos. This generated a strong feeling among the Indian Statesmen and people for a strong and unified centre at Delhi.[13]

On 5 July 1947, Sardar Patel issued a statement explaining that apart from Defence, External Affairs and Communications, the States would have an autonomous existence in the new Union.[14] As regards the question of future relationship of the States with the successor Government, it was thought that some sort of an Instrument of Accession, based more or less on the model of the draft Instrument of Accession of 1935, might be prepared. Accordingly, Lord Mountbatten called a special meeting of the Chamber of Princes on 25 July 1947.[15] In course of his address he advised the Rulers to accede to the appropriate Dominion in regard to three subjects of Defence, External

Affairs and Communications, and assured them that their accession on these subjects would involve no financial liability and that in other matters, there would be no encroachment on their internal sovereignty.[16] The States Department then began negotiation with all the States for their accession and by 15 August 1947 all the States within the geographical limits of India acceded to the Dominion of India on three subjects of Defence, External Affairs and Communications, their content being as defined in List 1 of Schedule VII to the Government of India Act, 1935.[17]

The accession of the States to the Dominion of India established a new organic relationship between the States and the Government of India. The constitutional link thus forged proved strong enough to bear the stress of the upheaval through which the country had to pass and enabled the Government of India and the Governments of the States and the Provinces concerned to take concrete and co-ordinated action in relation to matters of common concern.[18] High Walls of political isolation had been reared up and buttressed to prevent the infiltration of the urge for freedom and democracy into the States. By conceding the three subjects of Defence, External Affairs and Communications the Princes virtually accepted the substitution of the British Government by the Indian Government on the same term. India had become one Federation with the Provinces and States as integral parts. Lord Mountbatten aptly said in the Constituent Assembly on 15 August 1947:[19]

> With the accession of the States, a unified political structure was established in India.

The stage was now set for the final phase of integration which, in reality, was a logical sequence of the events traced hitherto.

With the advent of Independence, the popular upsurge in the States for attaining the same measure of freedom as was enjoyed by the people in the Provinces gained momentum and unleashed strong movements for the transfer of power from the Rulers to the people.[20] Because the States were viable neither in terms of territory nor revenue resources and were hardly in a position to provide to their people a responsible Government as demanded. The agitation became violent and severe in States

like Nilgiri, Dhenkanal, Talcher, etc. The situation, if allowed to deteriorate, would have imperilled peace and good order not only in those States but in the province. The only approach to the problem was the integration.

The political future of these States had been considered by a Sub-Committee appointed by the Simon Commission. This Committee which was presided over by C.R. Attlee, had expressed the view that,[21]

> the Orissa Feudatory States which are not part of British India should be brought into relationship with any administration setup for Orissa.

The subsequent Committee of Enquiry relating to the Orissa States was the Enquiry Committee set up by the second Session of the Orissa States' Peoples' Conference. The Committee which published its report on 18 July 1939[22] exposed the prevalence of medieval feudal practices like *bethi*, *beggari*, *magan*, *rasad* and made the following unanimous recommendations;[23]

> In view of the inherent inability of the Orissa States to support popular enlightened administration within their area and in view of the inevitability of a strong and irresistible popular demand from the people and these States for rights of self-Government and self-determination the *Sanads* granted to the Rulers of the States by the Paramount Power should be cancelled and they may be treated as Land Lords of permanently settled estates such as Aul, Kujang and Kanika. That this could be done without doing any violence to the rights of these Chiefs, will be clear from a perusal and examination of their original status. The acceptance of this recommendation will bring these States under the jurisdiction of autonomous Provinces and the people concerned will be enabled to join hands with their brethren in the Province of Orissa in their attempt to solve the problems common to them all.

The recommendation of the Orissa States' Enquiry Committee to cancel the *Sanads* of the Rulers and reduce them to the position

of *Zamindars* in British areas was welcomed by the leading papers of India and England and the *Statesmân* urged upon the Government to accept the suggestion.[24]

When the Cabinet Mission[25] reached India Hare Krushna Mahtab, the prospective premier of Orissa met the Mission on 6 April 1946,[26] and advocated for the amalgamation of the States with the Province.[27] Mahtab convinced the Cabinet Mission that both the Province and the Orissa States were part and parcel of one economic, political, geographical, historical, linguistic unit. Same river system serves both, same literature inspires them and awakens common ideals and aspirations. He also revealed before the Mission the report of the Attlee Committee, and left no stone unturned in his attempt to convince the Mission for the amalgamation of the States with the Province. But the mission left the issue for negotiation and mutual agreement between the States and British India.[28]

In the meanwhile, Hare Krushna Mahtab assumed the offiee of the premier of Orissa on 23 April 1946[29] and accelerated the process of Integration of the States with the Province. In that connection he issued two circulars[30] to all the Rulers of Orissa States seeking their co-operation for the amalgamation of the States with the Province. Subsequently, the Rulers of Orissa and Chhatisgarh States met at Hastings House, Alipur, Calcutta, on 16-18 July 1946 and unanimously resolved to form the Orissa and Chhatisgarh States unit to feed the proposed Indian Union.[31]

While the Independence was approaching the fond hopes and ambitions on the side of the people in the States and the fears and apprehensions on the side of the Rulers were growing. The Rulers were trying hard to get together and form an union to maintain their *status quo* while the people in the States were bargaining to have representative Governments. Dr. K.N. Katju, Governor of Orissa wrote to Jawaharlal Nehru on 1 October 1947:[23]

> Everyday Orissa press carries stories of repression in one or other of these petty States. The Federation (Eastern States Union of the Rulers of Orissa and Chhatisgarh) has employed a police force of 700 recruited from Pakisthani Muslims and other and so on. The

> *Prajamandals* in some States are carrying on vigorous propaganda and we get the familiar account of *lathi* charge, arrests and detentions without trial. I think these States should be definitely told that they cannot be permitted to swagger about with notions of independent Kingship and Sovereignty. Many of them are not even as big as some of the *Zamindaris* of United Provinces. The Orissan Press, dailies, weeklies, conveying the mass opinion strongly advocate the establishment of genuine Governments in the States. Having regard to the slender resources of the Province and of these States acting in isolation, it is imperative in the interest of further developments that there should be the closest co-operation between them.

But the Congress leaders of the country and the Province advocated for the amalgamation of the States, because they viewed that the States were very small and their resources were limited and insufficient to support any independent administrative structure.[33] After strenuous efforts Hare Krushna Mahtab succeeded in meeting the Rulers of Orissa States being headed by the Ruler of Saraikella at Sambalpur on 16 October 1946.[34] Mahtab emphasised[35]

> So far as Orissa is concerned, considering its geographical, linguistic and ethnological affinity with the States, it is desirable that there should be one administration for both the States and the Province, otherwise both the Province and States can have no efficient planning in the absence of which each part will be weak in comparison with the other provinces of India.

But nothing substantial came out of the meeting, rather they emphasised that the combination of all the Orissa and Chhatisgarh States would be a practical proposition and would be stronger than the union of the States with the Province.[36] Thus, keeping the view of an Eastern States Union the Rulers of Orissa and Chhatisgarh States met in a conference at *Rajkumar* College, Raipur on 21-22 December 1946.[37] The Conference was attended by 23 Rulers, Resident of Eastern States Agency

and the Political Agents of Orissa and Chhatisgarh States. They formed the Eastern States Union which started functioning from 1 August 1947.[38] It had an elaborate constitution and was financed by the constituent states. It was also maintaining an Eastern States joint police force. The arguments in favour of the Eastern States Union, made by the Maharaja of Patna and conveyed to Honourable Viscount Wavell, the Viceroy and Governor-General of India were,[39]

> The States federating the Eastern States Union were similar in size, resources, status, history, tradition and the administrative system with no danger of encroachment from or absorption or exploitation by any predominantly large unit in the group; (*ii*) Compactness, geographical contiguity, sufficiently large area (60 square miles) and population (80 lakhs people) and possession of adequate natural resources, forest, mineral and agricultural, to enable the group to be a sound and stable unit of the proposed All India Union. . . . On the other hand, the dangers of grouping with the Province of Orissa were: (*a*) danger of large unit like Orissa, encroaching upon the rights of smaller States units; (*b*) danger of Political exploitation of the States' people by the more politically conscious people of Orissa Province; (*c*) danger of economic exploitation of the States by the Province and (*d*) the difficulties with regard to the Chhatisgarh States, some of which were partly Oriya-speaking.

In the process of integration of the States, by the people and the Congress workers, counter activities were systematically carried on by the Rulers of the States. On the eve of the integration there were two types of movements going on side by side, *i.e.*, Integration and balkanisation of States to form the Eastern States Union.[40] The Rulers carried on vigorous mass propaganda through songs, folk dances, distribution of money in order to obtain the public support and sympathy to materialise their plan for Eastern States Union.[41]

Incidentally, at such a time Sir Hawthorne Lewis, the Governor of Orissa laid the foundation stone of the Hirakud Dam Project in March 1946[42] on the river Mahanadi at Hirakud and

the Rulers got an opportunity for fishing in the troubled water of the local politics. It was an extensive Multi-purpose National Project primarily intended to control the flood in Mahanadi and save Cuttack and the coastal settlements in the Mahanadi delta. The Project, on the other side, involved the submerge of large tracts of cultivatable lands and villages of the Sambalpur region. When the Government of Orissa started acquiring those lands from the tenants by paying compensation, the Rulers exploited the situation and excited the affected mass against the step-motherly attitude of the Orissa Government, that was forcing them to abandon their ancestral properties, lands and hearths in the interest of the coastal people. They sponsored a very high pitched anti-Hirakud Dam agitation with the *Hirakhand Samachar* and *Patna Dipika* published from Patna as its spokesman, preaching Regionalism. Local *gauntias*, paid workers, states' school teachers were all engaged for arousing the popular sentiments against the *Kattaki Sarkar* (Orissa Govt.) and the *Kattaki Leaders* (Congress leaders).[43] States *Prajamandal* leaders and power aspiring Congress leaders of Sambalpur were assured for key posts in the administration in the event of the formation of the States' Union and were accordingly patronised to organise protest meetings and processions demanding the separation of the Sambalpur tract from Orissa and the formation of the Eastern States' Union. They also sponsored a political party with an anti-Congress attitude known as the "*Kosalatkala Praja Parishad*" pleading for the bifurcation of Orissa and creation of the States' Union.[44]

However, with the dawn of Independence on 15 August 1947, things began to develop in quick succession and the plans of the Rulers were completely shattered. The States Ministry under Sardar Patel was compelled by the force of circumstances to take necessary steps to arrest the process of "balkanisation" of India. Hare Krushna Mahtab, the Premier of Orissa, submitted a memorandum to Sardar Patel[15] enumerating the various administrative difficulties created by the territories of the Orissa States being interlaced with the Province. In the memorandum Mahtab highlighted that of these the most important was related to law and order, smuggling across the borders, the administration of controls, especially in regard to food, and the development of communications and river valley projects. Mahtab

also suggested that, on the analogy of the solution applied in Burma, where the *shan* States[46] had created similar problem, some machinery should be set up for the common administration of certain subjects in the Orissa States and the Province.[47] He suggested that the following eight items should be the subject for common administration:

1. Communication
2. Education
3. Public Health
4. Provincial Police
5. Administration of Justice
6. Excise
7. Forest
8. Planning of Agriculture and Industry.

He further said that more subjects may be added to the list by mutual agreement but unless the above subjects were commonly administered, there would be great difficulties in the administration of both in the Province and in the States.

While these process of constitutional methods were going on. *Prajamandal* agitation revived in the States demanding the establishment of responsible Government and integration of the States with the Province of Orissa.[48] In the post-Independence era the people of the States, from their past experience, had realised that in the absence of the British backing the Rajas were no match to their popular agitations. Moreover, they secured not only the blessings but full political support of the Congress[49] Party in their agitation for more reforms and political union with the Province.

The *Prajamandal* agitation became acute in the State of Nilgiri[50] in October-November 1947. It was a bloody conflict between the tribals and non-tribals of the State. The *Prajamandal* of the State, revived its agitation under Kailash Chandra Mohanty to secure responsible Government in the State. Their immediate objective was to set up a provisional Government on the borders of the State, to paralyse the State administration and resort to social boycott and picketing. Thereupon, the *Durbar* sponsored a band of tribals to counteract the activities of the *Prajamandal*.[51] The tribals under the leadership of one Sandhya

Singh[52] forcibly took over the possession of non-tribal lands; armed with bows and arrows looted paddy from the fields; set fire to the houses of the prominent *Prajamandal* leaders.[53] The State police took little notice of the complaints made to them against these acts of terrorism and aggression. Apprehending danger to the Province when the Magistrate of Balasore enquired on the issue on 31 October 1947, the Raja took the plea that on account of limited police force he was unable to put down the prevailing disorder in the State. But actually the Raja had recruited a number of *Gurkha* armed guards in his police force and sanctioned two platoons of armed police from the Eastern States joint police force.[54] The Government of Orissa went on submitting regular reports to the States Ministry of the Dominion Government. Thereupon, V.P. Menon, the Secretary of the States Ministry, wrote,[55]

> The greatest concern to the Government of India was the possibility that outbreaks among the aborigines might spread to those neighbouring areas in which they formed a considerable portion of population. . . . It appeared that the time had come to take firm and immediate action if chaos was to be prevented.

Subsequently, the Dominion Government authorised the Government of Orissa by a telegram on 8 November 1947[56] to depute the District Officer of Balasore with an adequate force to take over the administration of the State and to restore law and order. But in the meanwhile, the Eastern States Union intervened by deputing two[57] members of the Board of Rulers who visited Nilgiri on 3 November 1947 and at their instance negotiations were resumed between the *Prajamandal* and the Ruler for the formation of a responsible Government.[58] The Raja, by a public proclamation, granted responsible Government under Kailash Chandra Mohanty which was arranged to function from 14 November 1947.[59] But the whole situation took a turn for the worse on 12 November 1947 when there cropped up a serious clash between the tribals and the members of Communist Party[60] killling a number of persons from both the sides. Secondly, the Raja bargained the settlement that was reached between the *Prajamandal* and himself.[61] Thereupon, the Government of Orissa

intervened in the State as directed by Dominion Government on 8 November. Accordingly, on 14 November 1947, the District Magistrate of Balasore was authorised to proceed to Nilgiri with an adequate force to take over the administration from the Ruler.[62] A telegram was sent to the Eastern States Union at Raigarh requesting them to withdraw their force from Nilgiri in view of the Dominion Government's decision to take over its administration.[63] On arrival of the District Magistrate along with Naba Krushna Choudhury, the revenue Minister of Orissa, the Raja voluntarily handed over the administration of the State[64] and issued a proclamation expressing his gratitude to the Dominion Government for coming to help and enjoining on all subjects and State officials to extend their fullest support and co-operation to the new administration. The Raja ordered the union force to be disarmed and sent back to Calcutta in a special train. Nilgiri was then administered as an occupied territory of the Orissa Government till 1 January 1948 when the occupation was legalised by the merger of all the Orissa States with the Province.[65]

Over the issue of the memorandum submitted by Hare Krushna Mahtab to Sardar Patel advocating the merger of the States, a meeting was arranged by V.P. Menon on 20 November 1947.[66] Mahtab and Col. B.D.S. Bedi, Regional Commissioner of Sambalpur met in the office of V.P. Menon, Secretary to the Ministry of States where three tentative conclusions were reached:[67] first, that the Eastern States Union should not be recognised by the Government of India, secondly, that the 'B' and 'C' Class States should be asked to agree to common administration of certain subjects by the Provincial Governments and thirdly, that the States Ministry should call a meeting of the Rulers of 'B' and 'C' Class States at Cuttack sometime in December. Next morning Menon acquainted Sardar Patel with the tentative conclusions. Speaking on the lawlessness that was spreading in the States of Orissa, Menon had stated,[68]

> We had to take note of the fact that with the transfer of power there was increased agitation in Orissa States for responsible Government. The people were politically very backward, there was substantial element of aborigines in the population. There was hardly any political organi-

sation worth mentioning. The area of most of the States was small and the resources inadequate for any modern administration. In some, the grant of responsible Governments by the Rulers had led to strange results. In one of the States the Ruler and the ministers agreed to divide the revenue of the State equally between them, without any provision for the administration. In another, responsible Government was followed by the closure of all Public offices.

V.P. Menon convinced Sardar Patel that under these circumstances the choice before them was either to bring about a sort of administrative co-operation between the Province and the States as stated by Hare Krushna Mahtab, or to merge the Orissa States with the Orissa Province and Chhatisgarh States with the Central Provinces.[69] Again Menon submitted that the suggestion of Mahtab, (in accordance with the memorandum) if implemented,[70] would be bound

> to create constant friction between the State authorities and the Provincial Government, so that the Government of India would have their hands full with arbitrating between these two authorities. The point in dispute being mainly administrative, no judicial tribunal would be in a position to arbitrate. . . . Equally thorny was the problem of fixing the basis of financial contribution to be made by the States for the subjects taken over by the Provincial Government.

Taking all these into account Sardar Patel was prepared to go all out to secure the merger of all three classes of Orissa States with the Province of Orissa and told Menon to invite all the Rulers of Orissa States to Cuttack for discussion in the second week of December 1947.[71] Accordingly, on 13 December 1947, Sardar Patel and V.P. Menon visited Orissa. There was a huge demonstration which started from Bhubaneswar Airport and went up to Cuttack demanding the merger of the States.[72] On reaching Cuttack Patel held a meeting with the Provincial Ministers as well as Governor Dr. Katju when V.P. Menon explained them the tentative plan of Sardar Patel for the merger

of not only 'B' and 'C' class States but also the 'A' class States.[73] A memorandum was prepared to be circulated among the Rulers next day.

Next day on 14 December, Sardar Patel met the Rulers of 'B' and 'C' class States in a conference in the Rajbhavan at Cuttack at 10.00 A.M. The Conference was attended by the Rulers of Athgarh, Baramba, Daspalla, Hindol, Khandpara, Kharswan, Narsinghpur, Nilgiri, Pal-Lahara, Rairakhol, Ranpur Talcher as well as the Rajmata of Ranpur. From the side of the Government there were Sardar Patel, V.P. Menon, Secretary to the Ministry of States, Hare Krushna Mahtab, K.V.K. Sundaram, I.C.S. of the Law Ministry, the Regional Commissioner of Eastern States, V. Sankar, I.C.S., Sardar Patel's Private Secretary, the Revenue Commissioner and the Chief Secretary of Orissa.[74] Sardar Patel delivered in the Conference,[75]

> The safety of the Rulers as well as of the people was in danger in Orissa and he had come to Cuttack to render friendly advice to the Rulers, not as a representative of the old Paramountcy or of any foreign power, but as a member of a family trying to solve a family problem.

Further, Patel convinced the Rulers of their limitations to provide any representative administration to the people, thereby incurring the wrath of the people. He assured them privileges, honour and dignity if they agreed to his proposal of merging their States with the Province.[76] The copies of the draft agreement for merger were circulated to the Rulers. The same evening Menon met the Rulers again where all the Rulers of 'B' and 'C' class agreed to the merger and signed the agreement.

After lunch on 14 December, the party met the Rulers of 'A' class States of Bamara, Baud, Dhenkanal, Gangpur, Kalahandi, Keonjhar, Mayurbhanj, Nayagarh, Patna, Saraikela and Sonepur. Sardar Patel explained the position to them on the same line as he had done to the Rulers of the 'B' and 'C' class States. He told them that the States in Orissa are like ulcers on the body of the Province and that they must either be cured or eliminated. If they listened to his advice they could be cured, otherwise, they might find themselves uprooted by the people.[77]

The address of Sardar Patel was followed by a lot of discussions and bargaining by the Rulers and in their first session of the meeting they did not agree to the proposal of merger.[78] Sardar Patel almost lost his patience at this but Menon managed the situation and told the Rulers to meet again at 10.00 P.M. that night. The Rulers agreed and the Conference was adjourned. Accordingly, Menon alone met the Rulers of 'A' Class at 10.00 P.M. He remained almost in continuous session with the Rulers from 10.00 P.M. of the previous night to about 9.00 A.M. in the morning of 15 December. After a lot of discussions, persuations and amendments to the merger agreement all the Rulers of 'A' class except Mayurbhanj agreed to the merger and signed the agreement.[79] Sardar Patel and his party were waiting for Menon at the Railway Station to leave for Bhubaneswar. There in the Railway Station Menon handed over to Sardar Patel the merger agreement signed by the Rulers of 'A' class States of Orissa[80] after which the triumphant train of Sardar Patel whistled amidst thunderous cheers, from the people, closing one of the darkest chapters of Orissan History.

Over the issue of the merger the Maharaja of Kalahandi alleged that V.P. Menon coerced him to sign the merger agreement. When Mahatma Gandhi heard it he gave the verdict that there was no alternative to administering a mere threat of coercion.[81] Mayurbhanj was excluded from the merger agreement because the Maharaja had granted a responsible Government to his people and that a popular ministry was functioning in the State. Therefore, he could not make any commitment without consulting his ministers. Thus, twenty-five Orissa States were merged with the Province.[82] On 16 December 1947, Sardar Patel issued a statement explaining the background of the agreement reached with the Rulers of Orissa and Chhatisgarh States, (*i*) Democratisation of the administration, which had long been the keynote of the Congress Policy towards the States, had become a pressing problem since 15 August, (*ii*) Democracy and Democratic institutions could function efficiently only where the unit to which these were applied subsist in a fairly autonomous existence where on account of smallness of its size, isolation of its situation and inadequacy of its resources, a State was unable to afford a modern system of Government both democratisation and integration were clearly and unmistakably indicated.[83] On

23 December 1947, in exercise of the powers conferred by the Extra Provincial Jurisdiction Act, 1947, the Government of India delegated to the Orissa Government the power to administer the Feudatory States, merged on 14 December, in the same manner as the districts in that Province". It became effective from 1 January 1948[84] and this day was observed as the *Garjāt Mukti* (Liberation) Day.

Such an event of historic significance had its echo in the Assembly on its sixth session on 7 January 1948.[85] Dr. Kailash Nath Katju, Governor of Orissa, addressed the members of the Assembly as follows:

> When you are meeting for the first time after the fulfilment of one of our long cherished desires, I could not help coming and meeting you again and sharing with you the joys we all feel on the re-emergence of the Utkal of ancient days . . . . I consider it an act of far-sighted Statesmanship on the part of the Rulers of those States that they bowed to the inevitable and in the end they willingly and voluntarily agreed to part with their power whatever it was, and to handover administration to the Indian Union with a view to the merger of the States with the Province. The 15 August 1947 will for all time be a landmark in our national history and in Utkal the 14 December 1947 would also be treasured as a day of historic significance.

After the Governor's address the following resolutions were passed in the House on the same day:[86]

> In placing on record its sense of deep appreciation of the decision of the Dominion Government to make over the administration of the Orissa States to the Government of Orissa, this Assembly expresses the hope that this historic and momentous decision will be followed by the comptele merger of the States in the Province of Orissa when the new constitution is framed and the Provincial boundaries are finally settled by the Constituent Assembly; it records its great admiration for the high patriotism of the Ruling Chiefs which has made this decision possible, and the far-

> sighted political wisdom displayed by them in divesting themselves of all administrative powers and political responsibilities; it sincerely congratulates the people of the States and shares their rejoicing on the successful achievement of political freedom and looks forward to welcoming their representative in this Assembly before long. . . .

Saraikela and Kharswan

However, the post-merger witnessed a period of conflict between the two neighbouring provinces of Bihar and Orissa over the States of Saraikela and Kharswan. The signing of the merger agreement by the Rulers of Saraikela and Kharswan on 14 December 1947 and taking over of the administration of both the States by the Orissa Government was resented by the inhabitants there. The District Magistrate of Balasore deputed there reported to the Orissa Government that the Adivasis were protesting the amalgamation of the States and the Government of Bihar was condemning the merger of Saraikela and Kharswan with Orissa.[87] The Government of Orissa sent memorandum to the Government of India laying claim to Saraikela and Kharswan. On 20 December 1947, both Orissa and Bihar Government received telegrams from the Government of India that the administration of those two States being handed over to Orissa on the clear understanding that the decision was an interim one and would be reviewed in due course which must be accepted both by Orissa and Bihar.[88] At the same time, the Government of Bihar was asked by the Central Government to take measures to restrain the *Adivasi* agitation and the Orissa Government was asked not to do anything exciting the feeling of the Adivasis nor to make any propaganda in Saraikela and Kharswan which might prejudice the decision of the Adivasis before the Enquiry Commission.[89] On 1 and 2 January 1948, the Adivasis armed with crude weapons led a violent procession protesting against the merger with Orissa. When the procession went beyond control, the Orissa Police stationed at Kharswan opened fire killing about forty *Adivasis*.[90]

The firing was followed by a campaign of villification against the Orissa Government. Jaipal Singh, the tribal leader, issued inflamatory speeches and aroused public opinion against the

Orissa Government at places like Ranchi, Chaibasa, Jamshedpur, etc.[91] The Rulers of Eastern States Union gave it the colour of an anti-merger agitation and that favouring the Union of the States. They thought it to be an opportunity to revive their Union movement and secretly tuned the Movement.[92] In February 1948, the Government of India announced the appointment of Justice Bavdekar to arbitrate the future of Saraikela and Kharswan.[93] Thereupon both, Bihar and Orissa Government launched their propaganda like employing welfare workers, opening schools, distributing money and clothes, selling rice at cheaper rate, etc., to secure the merger of both the States.[94] In April 1948, the Government of India announced the non-availability of Justice Bavdekar and declared that both Saraikela and Kharswan should be merged with Bihar on account of the situation of both the States as island territories in Singhbhum District and argued that it was impossible for these States to be efficiently managed by any other Government which is responsible for the administration of the district of Singhbhum.[95] Accordingly, the administration of Saraikela and Kharswan were handed over to the Government of India on 17 May 1948[96] and on 19 May 1948 the Government of India transferred them to the jurisdiction of the Government of Bihar.

Mayurbhanj

Mayurbhanj was the only State in Orissa where the *Prajamandal* secured the establishment of a responsible Government being headed by the *Prajamandal* leader, Sarat Chandra Das. The popular Government undertook a series of constructive programmes:

(*i*) Abolished the *Paik Jagir* by which 300 *paik* families were benefited and the State obtained a revenue of Rs. 30,000.

(*ii*) By a resolution of 20 March 1948 *Sardari* system was abolished in the State effecting from 1 June 1948.[97]

(*iii*) *Paik Pancha* was abolished and the most remarkable achievement was the establishment of a college at Baripada,[98] and a number of night schools.[99]

(*iv*) Prohibition was enforced throughout the State with the exception of Bamanghaty Sub-Division because the majority of the population was tribals.[100]

(*v*) Passed a resolution on 18 February 1948 declaring Mayurbhanj an independent and sovereign State.

But in the long run the popular Government could not live upto the expectation of the people. It failed because of the differences of opinion among the Ministers on policy-making which divided the Ministry.[101] The officials became more powerful and corrupt owing to the incapability of the Ministers. This made the Maharaja hostile towards the Ministry and the former thought of merging the State with the Province. On the other hand, the tribals of the State agitated under the leadership of Sonaram Soren condemning the idea of the merger of the State. In a meeting held on 25 December 1947 at Kapoi in Gadigan he secured consensus among the tribals to keep Mayurbhanj Independent and condemned the idea of merging the State with the Province of Orissa.[102] It may be traced that after the independence, the tribal leader, Jaipal Singh founded the "*Adivasi Mahasabha*" in Bihar, with himself as its President. The objective of the organisation being to form a separate State for the tribals. Sonaram Soren was highly inspired by Jaipal Singh and wanted to give a tribal identity to Mayurbhanj.[103] When the abolition of the *Sardari* system was passed the *Sardars* formed an opposition against the popular Government by forming the organisation "*Bhanjabasi*" headed by the *Prajamandal* leader Harish Chandra Das. This organisation pleaded for the merger of the State with the Province.[104] Thus, when the State entered into a state of chaos and lawlessness Sarat Chandra Das with a delegation went to Delhi in August 1948 to discuss with Sardar Patel who insisted them on the merger of Mayurbhanj as the only solution of the disturbances.[105]

Sarat Chandra Das on his return from Delhi found that the State was surcharged with a feeling of suspicion and resentment against the Government because of the rumour that Mayurbhanj had already been merged with Orissa.[106] The tribals who were advocating for a separate and independent entity of Mayurbhanj, now turned their outlook and demanded the merger of the State with the Province of Bihar and not with Orissa.[107]

On 14 October 1948, a meeting of the Mayurbhanj State Congress (State *Prajamandal*) was convened at Baripada and in that meeting the tribals' proposal to merge the State with Bihar was rejected on the following arguments:[108]

1. In Bihar the mother tongue was Hindi and the officials would not follow Oriya language which was the mother tongue of the people of Mayurbhanj.
2. The capital of Bihar at Patna was far from Mayurbhanj, whereas the capital of Orissa at Cuttack was very near to Mayurbhanj and well communicated in comparison to Patna.
3. Government of Bihar was not willing to accept the merger but the Government of Orissa was eager for it.
4. The All-India Congress Committee insisted on the merger of the State with the Province of Orissa.
5. Moreover, the people of Mayurbhanj were culturally more affiliated with Orissa since long.

The Maharaja also agreed to the proposal of the State Congress Committee and subsequently along with Sarat Chandra Das proceeded to Delhi on 16 October 1948 to sign the Instrument of Merger.[109] The formal taking over of the State by the Government of India took place in November 1948, when D.V. Rege, I.C.S. was appointed as the Chief Commissioner in Mayubhanj.[110]

D.V. Rege took over the charge of administration on 9 November 1948 and the State '*Vyvasta Sabha*' and the '*Constituent Assembly*' were dissolved on the same day. The administration of the Central Government lasted only for a period of less than two months during which the situation was closely studied by the Chief Commissioner, who found linguistically and culturally the State was linked more with Orissa and on his recommendation, the Government of India decided the merger of Mayurbhanj with Orissa.[111] When the decision of the Central Government was announced, the *Adivasis* raised an armed rebellion under the leadership of Sonaram Soren and Rama Chandra Majhi protesting against the merger of Mayurbhanj with Orissa.[112] They demanded Mayurbhanj to be merged with

Bihar like that of Saraikela and Kharswan. They declared Bamanghaty independent with Rairangpur its headquarters.[113] Gradually, they became more violent and started attacking the non-tribals, paralysing the road from Baripada to Bamanghaty.[114] They organised a number of meetings in places like Baripada, Deopata, Kuldiha, Gunduria and Bamanghaty and raised slogans, "We will merge with Bihar and not with Orissa" (*Misange Bihar Taluje, Odisa Taluje bang Misaba*).[115] The Government employed police force in Mayurbhanj opened fire at places like Kuldiha, Gunduria and Bamanghaty killing hundreds of tribals.[116] About three hundred tribals including Sonaram Soren were arrested.[117] Punitive taxes were imposed on them. V.P. Menon and Hare Krushna Mahtab rushed to Baripada.[118] V.P. Menon met Sonaram Soren and explained the tribals that if contiguity were the only criterion, the State could as well be amalgamated with West-Bengal. But culturally and economically the State had its affinity more with Orissa. Then he addressed the *Adivasis* in a public meeting and observed that:

> the tribals had no interest whatever in this agitation, that the whole demonstration was artificial and that these simple and unsophisticated people were being incited by interested agitators.[119]

Mahatab also convinced the tribals in a meeting at Rairangpur and declared that the Punitive tax amounting to one lakh would be spent for Public Works.[120] Thus, the agitation was suppressed with an iron hand and on 1 January 1949 Mayurbhanj was merged with Orissa when it was constituted a district of the Province of Orissa.[121] Ultimately, 24 out of 26 Feudatory States were merged with Orissa.

The integration of the Feudatory States with the Province, apart from removing several administrative anomalies resulted in the creation of a homogeneous political unit in Orissa. Not only uniformity in administration was possible for people living in the erstwhile Princely States, but also the advantages of Rule of Law were made available to them. With the States gone, the ruling Princes and their families were confronted with new social challenges hitherto unknown and unfamiliar to them.

The integration reduced their status to the level of commoners forcing upon them the hazards of a new social identity devoid of political power and privilege. This loss of power would shortly motivate most of them to indulge in provincial politics by forming a right reactionary party called the *Ganatantra Parishad*, which under the stewardship of the Maharajas of Patna and Kalahandi emerged as a force to be reckoned with.

REFERENCES

1. In India the States of Orissa were the first to be integrated.
2. *Harijan*, 7 October 1939.
3. White Paper on Indian States, *op. cit.*, p. 32.
4. Government of India Act, 1935, (Delhi, 1936), Section 5(2).
5. *Ibid*, Section 6(1).
6. *Ibid*. Section 3.
7. White Paper on Indian States, *op. cit.*, p. 16.
8. *Ibid*, p. 32.
9. *Ibid*.
10. *Ibid*., p. 16.
11. *Ibid*., p. 26.
12. *Ibid*., p. 32.
13. The States covered an area of 715,964 square miles out of 1,581,410 square miles of pre-partition India which constituted about 45 per cent of the total Indian territories. In post-partition it was reduced to 587,949 square miles *i.e.* about 48 per cent of the total area of the Dominion of India which was 1,221,072 square miles. The population according to the Census of 1941 was 93.2 millions about 24 per cent of the total population of pre-partition India which was 389 million. After partition the total population of the Dominion of India was reduced to 318.9 million and that of the States within the geographical orbit of Indian Dominion to 89 million *i.e.* 28 per cent of the Dominion of India.
    (White Paper on Indian States, *op. cit.*, pp. 17-18).
14. V. Patel, *On Indian Problems*, (Delhi, 1949), p. 3.
15. White Papers on Indian States, *op. cit.*, p. 35.
16. *Ibid*.
17. *Ibid*., p. 36.
18. *Ibid*.
19. Urmila Phadnis, *op. cit.*, p. 197.
20. White Paper on Indian States, *op. cit.*, p. 38.
21. *Ibid*., p. 40.
    Orissa Legislative Assembly Proceedings, Vol. II, No. 22 (Cuttack, 1949), p. 864.

Report on the Indian Statutory Commission, Vol. II, p. 50.
22. R.O.S.E.C., p. 60.
23. *Ibid.*, p. 59.
24. O.L.A.P., Vol. II, No. 22, (Cuttack, 1949), p. 864.
25. The Cabinet Mission was appointed on 19 February 1946 by the Labour Government and it comprised Sir Stafford Cripps, Lord Pethick Lawrence and A.V. Alexander (Urmila Phadnis, *op. cit.*, p. 153).
26. H.K. Mahtab, *Beginning of the End*, *op. cit.*, p. 17.
27. O.L.A.P., Vol. II, No. 22, (Cuttack, 1949), p. 864.
28. The Cabinet Mission consulted only with the Rulers who manoeuvred at the back of the Mission to side-track the issue of merger. The Mission announced that Paramountcy would lapse on the transfer of Power and would revert to the States.
29. H.K. Mahtab, *Beginning of the End*, *op. cit.*, p. 101.
30. Circulars were issued vide letter No. D.O. 49(19), dated 10 May 1946 and No. D.O. 610 (19)/HPM, dated 29 June 1946, respectively. Interview: Hare Krushna Mahtab.
31. H.K. Mahtab, *Beginning of the End*, *op. cit.*, pp. 119-27. However, Mayurbhanj was the only State which hesitated to join the States Union. Letter from Maharaja of Mayurbhanj to Nawab of Bhopal, dated 19 September 1946.
32. Durga Das, (ed.), *Sardar Patel's Correspondence*, 1945-1950, Vol. V, (Ahmedabad, 1973), pp. 494-95.
33. Interview: Hare Krushna Mahtab, Naba Krushna Choudhury.
34. H.K. Mahtab, *Beginning of the End*, *op. cit.*, p. 130.
35. *Ibid.*, pp. 130-31.
36. *Ibid.*, p. 132.
37. *Ibid.*, p. 134.
38. *Ibid.*, p. 184.
39. Letter from Rajendra Narayan Singh Deo, Maharaja of Patna to the Viceroy and Governor-General of India, dated 30 June 1946.
40. Interview: Hare Krushna Mahtab, Naba Krushna Choudhury, Surendranath Dwivedy.
41. *Ibid.* *The Hirakhanda Samachar* (Oriya Weekly from Patna), 22 October 1946.
42. V.P. Menon, *The Story of the Integration of Indian States*, (Madras, 1961), p. 148.
43. *The Hirakhanda Samachar*, 22 October 1946.
44. *Who's Who of Freedom Workers in Orissa, Mayurbhanj, Keonjhar and Balasore Districts*, (Cuttack, 1967), p. 7.
45. V.P. Menon, *op. cit.*, p. 149.
46. *Shan* States—Small States.
47. V.P. Menon, *op. cit.*, p. 149.

48. Interview: Hare Krushna Mahtab and Surendra Nath Dwivedy.
49. *Ibid*.
50. Few Orissa Rulers like those of Nilgiri, Dhenkanal, Bonai, Tigiria, Athgarh and Rairakhol were divested of administrative powers by the Political Department for gross mal-administration as reported by the Military Intelligence Department to the Viceroy during the States' peoples' movement. They were restored to their powers in July 1947 to enable them to join the Union of Orissa and Chhatisgarh States as autonomous units.
(J.N.M.M.L., H.K. Mahtab Papers, File No. 2, pp. 131-33).
Letter from the Secretary to the Resident of Eastern States Agency, to Griffin, No. R. 4-3/46 P, dated 30 June 1947.
51. H.K. Mahtab, *Beginning of the End*, *op. cit.*, pp. 253-59.
Orissa Government's Press Communique, dated 15 November 1947.
52. Sandhya Singh was a murderer convicted by the State *Durbar* but was released on 15 August 1947.
53. *Prajatantra*, 5 November 1947.
54. Orissa Government's Press Communique, 15 November 1947.
55. V.P. Menon, *op. cit.*, p. 147.
56. Orissa Gavernment's Press Communique, 15 November, 1947.
57. Rajas of Baud and Khairagarh.
58. Orissa Government's Press Communique, 15 November, 1947.
59. *Ibid.*
60. The Communists were also the members of the *Prajamandal* of the State.
Interview: Naba Krushna Choudhury, Surendra Nath Dwivedy.
61. *Ibid.*, Hare Krushna Mahtab.
62. Orissa Government's Press Communique, 15 November 1947.
63. *Ibid.*
Interview: Naba Krushna Choudhury.
64. *Ibid.*
K.M. Patra, *Orissa State Legislature and Freedom Struggle*, *op. cit.*, p. 284.
65. H.K. Mahtab, *Beginning of the End*, *op. cit.*, p. 28.
O.L.A.P., Vol. II, No. 22 (Cuttack, 1949), p. 866.
66. V.P. Menon, *op. cit.*, p. 149.
67. *Ibid.*
68. *Ibid.*, p. 150.
69. *Ibid.*, p. 151.
70. *Ibid*.
71. *Ibid.*, p. 152.
72. Interview: Hare Krushna Mahtab, Naba Krushna Choudnury, Pabitra Mohan Pradhan.
Nabeen, 16 December 1947, Sardar Patel was also accompanied by daughter Maniben Patel.
73. V.P. Menon, *op. cit.*, p. 155.
74. *Ibid.*

75. *Ibid.*
76. *Ibid.*, p. 156.
    Interview: Hare Krushna Mahtab.
77. V.P. Menon, *op. cit.*, p. 157.
78. Interview: Hare Krushna Mahtab, Surendra Nath Dwivedy.
79. V.P. Menon, *op. cit.*, p. 160.
    H.K. Mahtab, *Beginning of the End*, *op. cit.*, p. 130.
    White Paper on Indian States, *op. cit.*, p. 41.
80. Interview: Hare Krushna Mahtab, Naba Krushna Choudhury, Surendra Nath Dwivedy.
81. H.K. Mahtab, *Beginning of the End*, *op. cit.*, p. 30.
82. *Nabeen*, 6 January, 1948.
83. White Paper on Indian States, *op. cit.*, p. 40.
84. O.L.A.P., Vol. II, No. 22, *op cit.*, p. 874.
    The States were administered by the responsible Government of Orissa through administrators and Council of Advisors which comprised mostly the *Prajamandal* leaders of the States.
    Nabeen, 6 January 1948.
85. O.L.A.P., Vol. VI, 1947-48, pp. 81-82.
    The charges were handed over on 7 January 1948 with the appointment of Administrators in all the States.
86. O.L.A.P., Vol. VI, 1947-49, p. 86.
87. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, No. 22, p. 867.
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89. *Ibid.*
90. *Ibid.*
91. *Ibid.*
92. *Ibid.*, p. 869.
    H.K. Mahtab, *Beginning of the End*, *op. cit.*, p. 31.
93. *Ibid.*
94. O.L.A.P., Vol. II, No. 22, *op. cit.*, p. 789.
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105. *Mahtab O Orissa*, p. 85.
106. Extraordinary Mayurbhanj State Gazette, 16 September 1948.

107. *Desasevak*, p. 5.
108. *Ibid.*, pp. 5-6.
Interview: Prasanna Kumar Das.
109. *O.D.G. Mayurbhanj, op. cit.*, p. 83.
110. *Ibid.*
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112. Interview: Maharaja Pradeep Chandra Bhanja Deo, Prasanna Kumar Das.
113. H.K. Mahtab, *Sadhanar Pathe, op. cit.*, p. 351.
114. *Ibid.*
115. Interview: Prasanna Kumar Das.
116. H.K. Mahtab, *Sadhanar Pathe, op. cit.*, p. 351.
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118. V.P. Menon, *op. cit.*, p. 166.
119. *Ibid.*
120. H.K. Mahtab, *Sadhanar Pathe, op. cit.*, p. 351.
121. *O.D.G. Mayurbhanj, op. cit.*, p. 83.
To please the tribals '*Adivasi* Congrsss' was formed in Mayurbhanj. The tribal leaders were given representation in the new Government. They were Ghasiram Sandil from Panchpir Constituency, Sonaram Soren from Bahalda Constituency and also became a Cabinet Minister of Orissa, Jadev Murmu from Bangiriposi Constituency. Rama Chandra Majhi was elected from Mayurbhanj to the Lok Sabha of India.

6

Conclusion

SINCE the Mughal period, Orissa was divided into two regions taking into account its economic and political suitability, *viz.*, (*i*) '*Mughalbandi*' comprising the plain and fertile lands in the coastal region and (*ii*) '*Garjāts*' comprising the hilly region under the local Chiefs paying fixed annual tributes to the Paramount Powers, *i.e.*, the Mughals and the Marathas. When the British (East India Company) conquered Orissa in 1803, it also continued the traditional policy of keeping *Mughalbandi* separate from the *Garjāts* by subjecting the *Garjāt* Chiefs to Treaties and Engagements. They were recognised as Feudatories. The *Garjāts* numbering to 26 Feudatory States were exempted from the operation of the General Regulation system prevailing in the British administered districts of Orissa and were enjoying a semi-autonomous status and administratively followed a pattern of their own which was more akin to a feudal system. Their conduct was regulated by the Judge-*cum*-Magistrate of Cuttack from 1805 to 1814, and from 1814 to 1906 they were under the superintendence of the Commissioner of Orissa Division and from 1906 they were kept under the jurisdiction of the Political Department who conducted them through Agents till the lapse of the Paramountcy in 1947. However, the British Government categorically warned the Superintendents and the Political Agents to interfere as little as possible in the internal administration of the *Garjāt* Chiefs, and kept itself satisfied with the timely payment of tributes and loyalty of the Chiefs.

This avowed policy of non-interference by the British gave a free hand to the Chiefs in the internal administration of their

respective States. Under the aegis of the Political Department, they were safe from external aggression and internal rebellion. In the absence of any effective challenge to their authority, the States continued to be unbridled autocracies wherein democratic institutions even in an elementary form did not exist. Exactions and repressions were the standard norms of the administration. The latitude of freedom enjoyed by the Princes in their States had the implicit approval of the British. More frequently than not this put the common men in trouble. Protected by the Paramount Power the Chiefs often tended to be autocrats abusing the power of the State. In return, the British Government got the loyal support of the rulers for the sustenance of the Colonial rule, but irreparable damage was caused to the interest of the people living in the States. From time to time the British Government was conferring upon them titles, honours and protections strengthening their position in their territories. By doing this they used the Princes as instruments to stifle the nationalist movement in the *Garjāt* area.

The Feudatory States being predominantly inhabited by the peasants, the peasantry became the foremost victim of the feudal autocracy. They had no occupancy right over the lands they cultivated. A peasant was liable to ejection in spite of long posssession and enjoyment for generations. The Chief owned all the lands, forests, hills and almost all livestock through monopolies. Lands were heavily taxed without any regard to its yielding or the capacity of the peasants to pay. Neither the wholesome rule of Manu regarding land tax nor the scientific principles of land revenue assessment evolved by the experts of the British Government in India were observed by the States. Defaulters of land revenue were very severely and inhumanly tortured like, flogging, molestation, raid by State police, keeping in the lock-ups without food and water, confiscation of their properties, etc. The system of taxation defied all canons of a sound financial system. Whereas their counterparts in the British administered areas were paying remarkably low rent. In addition to the high land revenue and State monopolies on various necessities of life, the peasants were required to pay a number of feudal levies like free and forced labour and contributions (*bethi, beggari, magan, rasad, shikar bethi,* and *hatihkeda*

bethi, etc.). Under such a situation the people were mercilessly exploited and oppressed.

The idea that they were Rajas, born to rule over the people and to adorn the gilded seats of the Chamber of Princes, intoxicated the best of man in them. They wanted to augument their scanty resources at the cost of their peasantry whose reserve had already been exhausted. The peasantry was on the highway to utter ruin and destruction. To add to the distress of the people there was neither civil liberties nor rule of law. Even the independence of judiciary was conspicuous by its absence. Bribery and corrupion prevailed from top to bottom. Apprehending the spread of political consciousness the States' People were denied the opportunity of English education and social contact with the people of the British administered areas. Thus, the people in the States led a life of isolation, stagnation, ignorance and apathy under petty autocrats. Mahatma Gandhi rightly remarked them as 'Hitler' in their respective possessions.

'Where there is oppression there is resistance' is a well known aphorism. Under the circumstances the peasantry could no longer endure the brutal oppression and persecution by the *Durbar* administration and they rose in one heroic struggle after another. Ratan *Meli* of 1863 and Dharni *Meli* of 1891 in Keonjhar, Kondh *Meli* of 1882 in Kalahandi, disturbances in Narsinghpur in 1878, in Daspalla in 1880-90, in Mayurbhanj in 1866 and Nayagarh *Meli* in 1893 were a few instances of disaffection of the peasantry against the Rulers during the 19th century. Similarly, in the first three decades of the present century, there were peasants uprisings in the States of Bamara in 1908, Daspalla in 1913, Mayurbhanj in 1917, Dhenkanal in 1922, Nilgiri in 1928, Talcher in 1911-32 and Baud in 1930. All these uprisings were nothing but demonstration of deep seated grievances and resentment of the peasantry against the oppressive and arbitrary enhancement of rents and feudal exactions. But these were neither organised nor even political in their character and were confined within the four walls of the respective States. Hence, everytime the risings could be suppressed by the Rulers with ruthless severity being backed by the Military Force of the Paramount Power.

When the wave of Gandhian movement of Non-violence and Civil-disobedience caught the British administered areas in an unprecedented nationalist frenzy, political consciousness slowly percolated into the dark citadels of the Feudatory States. A handful English educated persons of the States along with the Congress workers of the Province formed the first Political organisation called the "Orissa States' Peoples' Conference" in 1931 to channellise the political movements in the States. The organisation was affiliated to the All-India States' Peoples' Conference and it sponsored *Prajamandals* in each State to agitate in an organised manner. The *Prajamandals* were imbued with the principles of non-violence and peaceful agitation (*Satyagraha*) of Mahatma Gandhi, and successfully ventilated the grievances of the people before the ruling Chiefs. The Orissa States' Peoples' Conference in its second session instituted a Committee of Enquiry into the States which exposed the prevalence of various illegalities and injustices in the States and recommended the drastic curtailment of monarchical privilege by reducing the status of the States to estates as in the British administered districts.

During 1938-39, the States' People launched vigorous agitation under the leadership of their respective *Praja-mandals* and the guidance of the Orissa States' Peoples' Conference. In each case the State *Prajamandal* presented a Charter of Demands for redressing the economic and political grievances through liberal agrarian legislation, abolition of feudal practices and establishment of responsible Government. They also launched '*Satyagraha*' for the early fulfilment of their demands. Simultaneously, with the Congress movement for freedom of British India, the *Prajamandal* Movement in the States for liberation from feudal order and institution of representative Government assumed an alarming proportion during the 1930s. The agitation became so intense that it led to the exodus of more than 25,000 in Talcher, several occasions of firing in Dhenkanal, murder of Major Bazelgette, the Political Agent in Ranpur, breach of agreement in Nilgiri, firing over innocent crowed in Gangpur and banning of the *Prajamandals* in the States. The State authorities in every case requisitioned the Paramount Armed Forces to suppress the peoples' agitation. With the outbreak of the World War II in September 1939 the

British strengthened the hold of the Rajas to preserve their Imperial possession and a lull prevailed in the States till 1942 when the peoples' movement in the States was resumed with greater vigour in response to Gandhi's call for 'Quit India' Movement. In Talcher, the non-violent agitators were machine-gunned from air and in Dhenkanal the establishment of a parallel Government in one sub-division was followed by a reign of terror.

The role of the British Government in relation to the States and the States subjects was very unfortunate. While it seldom interfered in the internal affairs of the States and justified the intervention on grounds, such as the interests of the people, better administration, peace and tranquillity, etc., at the same time it consistently stuck to the Treaty rights of the Rulers when the State people demanded redress of their grievances and maintained that States being autonomous in their internal affairs; the British Government could not interfere therein. When the peoples' struggle threatened to be effective, then on the plea of Paramount Power's obligation to sustain the authority of the State, the British authorities rendered to the Rulers necessary help like lending military troops, solely for retaining their grip on Imperialism.

With the Independence of India on 15 August 1947 the British Paramountcy lapsed creating a political vacuum between the States and the Province. Once again the people of the States launched vigorous agitation for securing responsible Government and the merger of the States with the Province of Orissa, because from their past experience they realised that in the absence of the British support the Rajas were helpless against popular agitation. The movement became so acute in Nilgiri in October-November 1947 that it went beyond the control of the Raja and the Provincial Government being authorised by the States Ministry of the Dominion Government intervened into the matter. Nilgiri was administered as an occupied territory of the Provincial Government. Observing serious disturbances in the States Sardar Patel visited Orissa on 13 December 1947 and effected the merger of 25 States with the Province of Orissa on 14 December 1947 except Mayurbhanj. Mayurbhanj was excluded from the merger because the Raja had granted a popular ministry in the State and without consulting the ministry

he refused to make any commitment. The merger of other States was legalised from 1 January 1948.

Saraikela and Kharswan became the bone of contention between the neighbouring Provinces of Bihar and Orissa. The tribals and their leaders being prompted by the Rulers manipulated the situation and launched an anti-merger move. The situation necessitated the arbitration by Government of India who on grounds of geographical contiguity and administrative convenience decided the merger of both the States with Bihar. This created such bitterness among the Oriya-speaking people, that in 1955 when the States Re-organisation Commission was set up to reconstitute Provincial boundaries, the Government of Orissa vigorously fought for restoration of these two Oriya-speaking States, but in vain.

In Mayurbhanj, when the popular Government failed to function smoothly the Raja along with the Ministers proceeded to Delhi and signed the Instrument of Merger on 16 October 1948. The Government of India justifying the action declared the merger of Mayurbhanj with Orissa as irrevocable on account of geographical, linguistic and cultural affinity. But the tribals of the State under instigation of vested interest agitated violently against the decision demanding the merger of Mayurbhanj with Bihar. But firm action by the Government finally restored law and order in the State and the tribal population accepted the merger as a *fait accompli.* Mayurbhanj constituted one of the districts of Orissa.

Thus, out of twenty-six Oriya-speaking Feudatory States twenty-four could be integrated with Orissa to give the Province its present political shape. The integration was the final culmination of the oppressed peasantry's grim struggle for liberation from the prolonged tyranny and feudal social order. It is no doubt true that the Congress movement for freedom in the 1930s and the agrarian reforms introduced by the Congress-led Provincial Government in Orissa in 1938 exercised profound influence on the mind of the States' people and motivated them to wage an unceasing battle against the Princely power. Their success ushered in a new era of social and political progress in the most inaccessible and neglected area of the Province.

Appendices

APPENDIX I

List of Orissa States with their Population, Classification and the Name of the Chiefs*

Sl. No.	Name of the States	Name of the Chiefs	Population 1931 Census
		'A' Class	
1.	Mayurbhanj	Maharaja Pratap Chandra Bhanja Deo	886,745
2.	Patna	Maharaja Rajendra Narayan Singh Deo	566,943
3.	Kalahandi	Braja Mohan Deo, O.B.E.	513,675
4.	Keonjhar	Balabahadur Narayan Bhanja Deo	460,647
5.	Gangpur	Biramitra Pratap Sekhar Deo	356,388
6.	Dhenkanal	Sankar Pratap Mahendra Bahadur	284,328
7.	Sonepur	Maharaja Bira Mitroday Singh Deo	237,945
8.	Bamara	Bhanuganga Tribhuban Deb	151,259
9.	Nayagarh	Krushna Chandra Singh Mandhata	142,399
10.	Baudh	Narayan Prasad Deo	135,248
		'B' Class	
1.	Athgarh	Raja Srikaran Radhanath Babarta Pattnaik	50,148
2.	Athmallik	Kishore Chandra Deo Samanta	64,276
3.	Khandpara	Harihar Singh Mardraj Bhramarbar Ray	77,930
4.	Narsinghpur	Ananta Narayan Hari Charan Mahapatra	40,882
5.	Baramba	Narayan Chandra Birabar Mangaraj Mahapatra	46,689
6.	Bonai	Indra Deo	80,144
7.	Daspalla	Kishore Chandra Deo Bhanja	42,650
8.	Hindol	Bahadur Naba Kishore Chandra Mardraj Jagadeva	48,897

(*Contd.*)

Sl. No.	Name of the States	Name of the Chiefs	Population 1931 Census
9.	Nilgiri	Kishore Chandra Mardraj Harichandan	68,598
10.	Rairakhol	Bira Chandra Jadumani Deo	35,715
11.	Talcher	Kishore Chandra Birabara Harichandan	69,631
		'C' Class	
1.	Pal-Lahara	Raja Manipal	27,975
2.	Ranpur	Birabara Krushna Chandra Singh Narendra Mohapatra	47,713
3.	Tigiria	Banamali Kshetria Birabara Champupati Singh Mohapatra	24,830
	24		4,643,436

*Compiled from the General Review of Administration of the Feudatory States of Orissa for the year, 1930-31, p. 29.

APPENDIX II

List of the States with their Area, Income and Tributes*

Sl. No.	Name of the States	Area in sq. miles	Income	Tributes paid to the British Government
1.	Athgarh	168	1,44,435	2,800- 0- 0
2.	Athmallik	730	1,64,122	480- 0- 0
3.	Baramba	142	93,504	1,397-15- 5
4.	Bamara	1,988	5,19,265	7,500- 0- 0
5.	Baud	1,264	3,30,991	800- 0- 0
6.	Bonai	1,296	2,09,441	2,700- 0- 0
7.	Daspalla	568	1,37,982	661- 7-11
8.	Dhenkanal	1,463	5,02,944	5,009- 0- 9
9.	Gangpur	2,492	5,54,511	10,000- 0- 0
10.	Hindol	312	94,186	551- 3-11
11.	Kalahandi	3,745	6,32,180	16,000- 0- 0
12.	Keonjhar	3,096	7,75,775	1,710- 1- 3
13.	Khandapara	244	2,26,297	4,211- 8- 8
14.	Mayurbhanj	4,243	28,22,675	1,067-11- 9
15.	Narasinghpur	199	1,08,471	1,455- 8- 3
16.	Nayagarh	590	3,94,271	5,525- 4- 1
17.	Nilgiri	284	1,94,987	3,900- 7- 8
18.	Pal-Lahara	452	89,363	266-10- 8
19.	Patna	2,399	8,61,953	13,000- 0- 0
20.	Rairakhol	833	94,027	2,000- 0- 0
21.	Ranpur	203	88,226	1,400-13- 2
22.	Sonepur	906	3,38,037	12,000- 0- 0
23.	Talcher	399	4,47,086	1,039-10- 5
24.	Tigiria	46	36,765	882- 0- 0
	24	28,664	1,01,28,237	96,449- 7-11

*General Review of Administration of the Feudatory States of Orissa for the year, 1930-31, p. 29.

APPENDIX III

Treaty and Engagements signed between the Chiefs of Orissa and the East India Company in 1803-04*

RAJA BALABHADRA Bhanja, Raja of Killah Kanika in the Soobah of Orissa, engage faithfully and correctly to abide by this engagements entered into by me with the Honourable East India Company as contained in the following clauses, to wit;

Clause I—I will always hold myself in submission and loyal obedience to the Honourable East India Company aforesaid.

Clause II—I will continue to pay, without demur, to the said Government, as my annual Peshkas or tribute 84,840 Kahuns of Cowrees in three instalments, as specified herein below.

Clause III—I will on demand to that effect, cause any person who is an inhabitant of the Soobah appertaining to the Honourable Company aforesaid, and who may have fled and come into my territory, to be forthwith arrested and delivered over to the Government.

Clause IV—Should any person who is a resident in my territories, commit a crime within the limits of the *Mughalbandi*, I hereby engage on demand to that effect, to cause such person to be arrested and delivered over for trial to the Government authority. Moreover, I further bind myself in cases where I may possess any claim or demand on one who is an inhabitant of *Mughalbandi*, not of my own authority to enforce such claim, but I will notify the same to the constituted authority and will act in accordance with such orders as may issue from him.

Clause V—I engage that whenever the troops of the Honourable Company's Government shall pass through my territories, I will direct the people of my Killah to supply, to the extent of their capability, all russad and supplies, which shall be sold at fair prices. Further, I will, on no manner of pretext whatever stop or detain, or offer any let or hindrance to, any subject of the Honourable Company's Government, or to any other person whatever

*C.U. Aitchison, *op. cit.*, pp. 314-16.
Such treaties were signed by all the ruling Chiefs of Orissa in 1803-04.

who may be proceeding by land or water with goods or orders, or with any Parwana on the part of the Government, through my boundaries, and will rather take care that no loss or mischief shall befall such parties in life or goods.

Clause VI—In case any neighbouring Raja or any other person whatever shall disobey the said Government, I engage, on demand and without demur, to depute a contingent force of of my own troops with the forces of Government for the purpose of rebuking and chastising such rebel and bringing him under the subjection of the aforesaid Government. Such contingent to receive only rations agreeably to the previously current practice, so long as they shall be present.

These shall be the instalments of my Peshkas:

In the month of Cheyt	—	28,840 Kahunas
In the month of Jeyt	—	28,000 Kahunas
In the month of Asar	—	28,000 Kahunas
		84,840 Kahunas

Dated 2nd November 1803
Saban 6th, 1211 Umlee.

The Kaool-Namah granted by the Honourable East India Company to the Raja of Kanika runs as follows:

We Lieutenant Colonel George Harcourt, Commanding the victorious troops of the Honourable East India Company and Commissioner of the Soobah of Orissa and John Melville, Commissioner of the same, appointed by the most Honourable the Marquis of Wellesley, Governor-General, for the settlement and pacification of the said Soobah, do, on behalf of the East India Company, execute this acknowledgement as setforth in the following paras to Raja Balabhadra Bhanja, of Kanika, in the said Soobah of Orissa.

Clause I—The annual Peshkas payable by the Raja for his Rajajee of the said Killah, as fixed in the perpetuity at 84,840 Kahunas.

Clause II—No further demand, however small, shall be made on the said Raja or received from him as nuzzur, supplies or otherwise.

Clause III—The Government of Honourable East India Company, it is well known, is ever gracious to those Rajas who are always loyal and obedient to them, and constant in the imperial administration of justice to all its subjects alike, and, therefore, in like manner extends the same impartially to the Rajas, such as have been indicated above and seeks always their prosperity and peace. Therefore, any just representation or complaints made to the Government by the said Raja of Kanika will meet with a decision in accord with justice.

Dated 2nd November 1803
Saban 6th, 1211 Umlee.

Sd/- G. Harcout
J. Melville } Commissioners

APPENDIX IV

Sanad granted to the Chiefs by the Chief Commissioner,* Central Provinces in 1867

To

Bishnuchunder Zeenamunee, Rajah of Rehracole, Tribhoobun Deo Bahadoor, Raja of Bamarh, Neladreee Singh Deo Bahadoor, Raja of Sonepur, Oodit Pratap Deo, Raja of Kahahundy, Soor Pratap Deo, Maharaja of Patna.

Whereas you were formely a Tributary Chief of a Gujrat State, His Excellency the Viceroy of India in Council has now been pleased to recognise you a Feudatory and to permit you to govern your own territories in all matters whether Criminal, Civil or Revenue, with the following proviso, that in the event of any offender appearing to you to merit capital punishment, you will before passing orders for carrying out such sentence, send the case up to the Commissioner of the Chutteesgurh Division, or such other officer as shall be nominated by the British Government, for confirmation.

Your nomination to be Feudatory is also subject to the following conditions and should you fail in complying with any of them, you will be liable to have your powers as a Feudatory circumscribed.

1. That you shall pay regularly the tribute of Rs. . . . now fixed for 20 years, *viz.*, from the current year 1867 to the year 1887 A.D. and that the said tribute shall be liable to revision at the expiration of the said term, or at any time thereafter, that the Government may think fit.

2. That you shall deliver up any offender from British territory or other territory who may take refuge in your State; that you will aid British Officers who may pursue criminals into your territory; and that in the event of offenders from your State taking refuge in British or other territory you will make a representation in the matter to the authorities concerned.

* Almost all the Sanads were patterned in this manner, with little modifications as demanded by the time and situation.

3. That you shall do your utmost to suppress crimes of all kinds in your State.

4. That you shall administer justice fairly and impartially to all alike.

5. That you shall recognise the rights of all your people and continue them in the same and that on no account shall you oppress them or suffer them in any way to be oppressed.

6. That you shall levy no transit duties on grain, merchandise, or any article of commerce passing through your State.

7. That you shall accept and follow such advice and instructions as may be communicated to you by the Commissioner of the Chutteesgurh Division, the Deputy Commissioner of Sumbulpore, or any officer duly vested with authority by the Chief Commissioner, Central Provinces.

8. That you shall appoint an approved Vakeel to be a permanent resident at the Sudder Station of the Sumbulpore District, in view to all orders affecting your State being communicated through him to you.

9. That you shall manage your abkaree revenue in such manner as not to interfere with the revenue of adjacent British territory; and that if your abkaree arrangements do so interfere, the Chief Commissioner shall have authority to raise your tribute by Rs. . . . per annum, until your abkaree arrangements are again satisfactory.

The Residency,
Nagpore,
4th September, 1867.

J.H. MORRIS,
Offg. Chief Commissioner.

Glossary

Abwabs	Extra imposts.
Adivasis	Tribals.
Ashram	Training Centre for Congress Workers.
Bethi	Free and forced labour.
Beggari	Free and forced carrying of luggages.
Bhogra	Service land attached to the office of the village headman.
Chasi	Farmer.
Daroga	A subordinate Police Officer.
Dewan	Minister or Adviser of the Raja.
Dewani	Civil authority.
Durbar	State Court.
Dusserah	Festival for worhipping goddess Durga.
Gaontia	Village headman.
Garjats	Feudatory States in the hilly tracts of Orissa.
Golas	Godowns.
Guru	Teacher.
Jagir	Rent-free land.
Jumma	Sum total of revenue payable by a Zamindar or a Feudal Chief.
Khadi	Homespun coarse cotton cloth.
Lakhraja	Tribal village headman.
Mahal	State yielding revenue.
Mahant	Chief of a monastery.
Matha	A monastery.
Mughalbandi	Revenue assessed lands of Balasore, Cuttack and Puri districts settled by the Mughalas.
Mulia	Labourer.
Nautch	Dance.
Nazrana	Recognition fees.
Paik	Peasant Militia enjoying rent-free lands.

Panchayat	Arbitration Court of the village, normally consisting of five elderly villagers.
Pragana	The largest fiscal division of land in a State.
Raja	Chief of a Feudatory State.
Ryot	A Cultivator.
Salami	A present to the Chief on some special occasions.
Sanad	A grant, a charter, a patent, a diploma, a document conveying to an individual, emoluments, titles, privileges, offices under the seal of the ruling authority.
Sardar	A headman, a revenue Collector with powers of local administration.
Satyagraha	Protest demonstration in a peaceful manner.
Sevadal	Service Organisation.
Shikar	Hunting excursion.
Swaraj	Self-rule.
Tahasildar	Tax Collector.
Zamindar	Landlord.
Zamindari	Land under the possession of the Zamindar.

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